

5-6-2-17

Good Tydings for
SINNERS,
Great Joy for
SAINTS:

Or a Word to the World, and Two
to those that are chosen out of the World,

Wherein is held forth, First, the sweet renders of Grace from the Father, through the Son, to all dejected Sinners. He invites them, he Wooes them, he Intreats them; nay, he Beseeches them to accept of Mercy.

In the second Part of this Book, called, Two Words to those chosen out of the World, the Saints are spoken to under their several Forms; taking notice first of the things commendable in them; and in the second place reproving them for things amiss among them.

With a short Prophecie of the downfal of
*Presbyterie, } Anabaptismy, } and
Independency } Vain Notions, } Free-Will,*

With a brief description of a true Church state, against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail; it being founded upon a Rock, it will stand against all waves and Storms that either Men or Devils can raise against it.

I will give you all one Heart, and one Way.

Then the Lord shall be one, and his Name one.

By Robert Purnel.

Printed for *Oliver Calvert* at the West end of Pauls 1652.

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To the Reader.

Courteous Reader,



Shall in few words give thee a just account why I have written this little Book. In these later days many Books are published; some good and wholesome; but few to ends not Carnal; for with every man is Imperfection, more or less; I must own it also. Yet I faithfully profess, that had my Credit or Advantage been my inducement hereunto, these thoughts had been buried in the womb: because I know I could reap no such fruit; or if I did, it were but vanity. He that gave me my being, hath given me a command to learn of him; not only to love his People, but also to love his Enemies, Mat. 5. 44.

God having kindled in me a love to you, both Saints and Sinners, I have here written **A Word** to the one, and **Two Words** to the other. Rom. 1. 14. I am debtor to the Greek, and to the Barbarian, both to the wise, and to the unwise.

And to thee fellow sinner is the first word, because I see many of those that undertake to teach thee, shutting the door of the Kingdom against thee; and instead of the Gospel of Christ, they preach to thee Moses, at least Elias, and that in the letter. The things I lay before thee, and commend unto thee, are such, and only such as I my self have past through, and found abundance of comfort in. And looking upon that place, 2 Cor. 1. 4. I finde it my duty to endeavour to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith I my self have been comforted of God.

Expect not here a pleasing method, sugred words, nor Scholastical expressions; for that savours more of the wisdom of man, then of God. Though it be not Scholastick, yet if thou findest it authentick, let it have acceptance with thee. First read, and then judge of what I have said; and the Lord that hath power, give thee understanding in all things.

In the first part of this Book, called **A Word to the World,**

To the Reader.

is held forth in few words the sweet tenders of grace from the Father, through the Son, to the poor dejected Sinners; wherein God invites, calls, woos, and intreats them to be reconciled to himself. He answers all the objections that lie in the way, he useth very strong and powerful Arguments: He not onely saith, but swears he delights not in the death of a sinner, Ezek 33. 11.

In the second part of this Book, called **Two Words** to those chosen out of the World: I my self having had communion with the Saints in each of those forms, more or less; their principles and practices I have in some measure weighed, examined, and tryed, with an unbiassed affection: And I finde among all these (except those in this Book excepted) many excellent, sweet, and sound Truths, both in Doctrine and Discipline, Principle and Practice, worthy not only of Commendation, but also of our Imitation.

But notwithstanding there are many things that savour more of the flesh, then of the Spirit, among all these Assemblies, which are rather of mans invention, then of Gods institution: as their knowing Christ and Saints after the flesh; crying, **Lo here, lo there is Christ**, and most ill a fence building upon the sand. Wherefore I have here prophesied of their fall; in which I mean not that they shall be without Church-order; but they shall have Pastors and Teachers, Elders and Deacons, Helps and Governments: But the ground of this Communion shall be spiritual Union. And when this day is dawning, and this Day-star risen in our hearts, Ephraim shall not cry Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim; Presbyterians shall not so bitterly cry out against Independents, nor Independents have such hard thoughts of the Presbyterians. Yea, they will be ashamed to even one another by these fleshly titles; but look upon, and love one another as Christians, members of the same Body, heirs of the same promise, children of the same Father; having all the same Spirit, all cloathed with the same Robe, inclined to the same work, ruled by the same Word and Spirit; and so their love to each other, shall arise from the Union in the Spirit.

And against this Church-state the gates of Hell shall not prevail.

Courteous

Courteous Reader.

These Books are printed for Giles Calvert, and are to be sold at his Shop, at the Black-spred-Eagle, near the West end of Pauls, viz.

Mr. Joseph Caryl his Exposition on Job, from Chap. 3. to Chap. 15.

Also several Sermons preached before the Parliament.

Mr. John Saltmarsh his Free Grace, or the flowings of Christs blood freely to Sinners.—His Sparkles of Glory, or Some beams of the Morning-Star.

Mr. Joshua Sprigg his Testimony to an approaching glory, in divers Sermons, to which is added A farther Testimony, with the Myserie of Christ risen.

Mr. Thomas Collier's works in several pieces, in one Volume compleat.

Gerard Winstanley's works in five several pieces, gathered into one Volume.

Jacob Behmen, the Teutonick Philosopher, his Book called Signatura rerum, or The Signature of all things; also his Epistles, explaining many things written in his other books.

Mr. Robert Bacons Catechism, entituled, Christ mighty in himself, and his Members.

Cornelius Agrippa his Occult Philosophy.

The Marrow of Modern Divinity, written by E. F.

Mr. Tho. Butler his Little Bible of the Man, or the Book of God opened in Man.

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Mr. Symons his Saints like Christ.

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flashes of Lightnings of the Son of man — Also his
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tism, by Mr. I. Tombs.**

**The Husbandmans Harrow, to pull down the Ridges of the
Presbyterial Government, and smoothe a little the Independent,
by Ellis Bradshaw.**



A Word to the **WORLD.**

THAT Sin had its first entrance into the world by *Adam*, we all know; what Sin is in its own nature, most of us do know: But that Sin is clearly taken away by the second *Adam*, *Iesus Christ*, that very few do know.

Poor sinner! why dost thou lie groaning? Come along with me, and hear Christ thy Lord speaking to thee.

Quest. What is that that doth so trouble thee?

Answ. Oh, my sins, my sins.

Quest. What is sin?

Answ. The breach of a Command, or the transgression of a Law.

Chr. Though thou hast broken this Law, yet consider that there is one to be found that hath kept it; first, in thy nature; secondly, for thee,

and imputes the keeping of it to thee, as really, as if thou hadst fulfilled it thyself. Art thou a sinner? Christ saith, He came to call sinners, and why not thee?

Sinner. Oh but I am one of the greatest of sinners.

Chr. Yet consider what the Lord saith in these Scriptures, John 1. 29. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. 3 Joh. 16. God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son, to take away the sins of the World. 1 Tim. 1. 15. He came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

Object. Oh! But though he came to save sinners, it is a question whether he died for all sinners; and therefore I question whether he came to call me, or to take away my sins; I see no ground why I should believe; nay, I cannot believe; Faith is too high a thing for me to attain unto.

Answer. But consider, God is the alone worker of it, Heb 12. 2. And when thou lookest upon Faith, and seest it too hard a thing for thee; yet consider, that nothing is too hard for God, who hath undertaken to work it.

Object. If I could see a promise, wherein God hath promised to work it, that were something.

Quest. What art thou? A Jew, or a Gentile; Scythian, or Barbarian?

Answer. I am a Gentile, a sinner.

Chr.

Chr. Then these are promises for thee ; see Mat. 12. 21. Romans 15. 12. In him shall the Gentiles trust.

Sin. But all Gentiles do not, neither shall they believe; therefore if I could see my name written in Scripture, and a promise made to me in reference to that name, then there were hope indeed.

Chr. Thou art just like Thomas, Joh. 20. 25. Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe: Well saith Christ, thou shalt see the print of the nails; reach hither thine hand, &c. Wilt thou see thy name in Scripture indeed?

Sin. Yea, with all my heart ; But I fear it is not there.

Chr. Why doubtest thou? all things are possible to him that believes : Wilt thou see thy name? Then what is thy state? How is it with thee?

Sin. My state is miserable ; I am full of blindness and ignorance, and can understand nothing in a spiritual way.

Chr. Here is thy name then recorded, Isa. 50. 10. Who so walketh in darkness, and seeth no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon God.

Sin. But I am dead almost ; my heart and my flesh do fail me.

Chr. Why, canst thou read the beginning of the verse (With David) and not the latter end of it,

it, and God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever, *Psal. 73. 26.*

Sin. But I am weak (saith another poor soul:) Where is my name ?

Chr. *The weak shall be as David ; there is thy name.*

Sin. But saith another distressed soul, I am quite dead ; where is my name ?

Chr. *Ephes. 5. 14.* Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light : *There is thy name.*

Sin. But I have not ears to hear Christs voice, nor strength to arise, if I could hear.

Chr. *But Christ can give strength with his voice, as to Lazarus, Come forth, and he came forth.*

Sin. Here is comfort for these indeed : But oh ! that you could shew me my name in Scripture, and God speaking to me by name ; then I should believe, and rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Chr. *Well : What is thy name ?*

Sin. *Rebell ;* That is my name, for I have rebelled against the Lord ever since I was born ; I have lived in a continual breach of every command.

Chr. *Yet behold thy name, Psa. 68. 18.* Christ hath received gifts for men ; yea, for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

them. *Read thy name in every promise, endeavour to see thy name enrolled in the book of Life, where all the Devils in Hell, and all the wicked men in the World can never blot it out.*

Sin. Oh ! saith another poor distressed soul, I have no minde nor heart to seek after God ; Where is my name ?

Chr. *Isa.* 65. 1. I am found of them that sought me not. *There is thy name : though thou wilt not seek for him, yet he will seek and find thee.*

Sin. But I cannot believe ; Where is my name, saith another ?

Chr. 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.

Sin. 1. But I have called and cried for mercy, and that often, yet God would not answer me ; Where is my name ?

2. Saith another, Others have prayed for me, and the Lord gave them an answer, He was not sent to save me ; Where is my name ?

3. A third poor souls steps in, and saith, I spake with the Lord, as it were, and he told me I was a Dog, and that Dogs have nothing to do with Childrens bread ; oh, where is my name ?

Chr. *Will you see all your three names together ?*

Sin. Oh ! that it might be so, saith the troubled soul.

Chr. *Then read, and well consider that* *Mat.* 15.

ver.

ver. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. And behold, a woman of *Canaan* came out of the same coast, and cried unto him, saying, have mercy on me. O Lord, thou Son of *David*: but he answered her not a word. *There was the first step of his denial.*

Secondly, *His Disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. But he answered, and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel.* There is the second branch of his denial.

Thirdly, *Then came she, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me: But he answered, and said, It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and cast it to dogs.* There is the third branch of his denial.

And she said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their Masters table. Then Jesus answered, and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.

Oh the unsearchable love of a tender Father to a prodigal Son!

To sum up all in a word; Search diligently in what state thou standest, examine well thy present condition what it is: and when thou hast found out the true temper of thy soul, that thou canst truly say, Thus and thus it is with me; then search the Scriptures, for they were written for thy learning; and thou shalt find, upon serious consideration,

ration, that some one or other of the Saints (gone before thee) hath been in the same condition, and yet hath found mercy; Then thou wilt break forth with *Paul*. and say, *There is no temptation hath befallen me, but such as is common to all men; and the Lord will deliver me, 1 Cor. 10. 13. &c.* Are thy sins so many that thou canst not look up? so it was with that precious Saint *David*, *Psal. 40. 12. Psal. 38. 4.*

Dear friend, who ever thou art that readest these words, let me tell thee, I speak by experience; I have been in so sad a condition, even as it were in despair: And when I have read or heard these words, that such and such of the Lords own children were in the same condition; my heart hath begun to revive, and say, Well, the Lord hath dealt no otherwise with me, then he hath with such a Saint left upon record: now I see I am not alone in this heaviness; I cannot now say, *Was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?* Lam. 1. 12. But I can now say with *Jeremiah*, Lam. 3. 32. *Though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies.* I remember that sweet place of scripture, 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4. *Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that (saith he) we may be able to comfort them that be in trouble;*

by the comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of God.

Here by the way we may take notice, that it is a duty well becoming the Saints, to endeavour as instruments in Gods hands, to comfort others with the same comforts wherewith the Lord hath comforted them; *Come, (saith David) I will tell thee what the Lord hath done for my soul.*

Again; Oh thou drooping sinner, listen a little unto the voice of Christ, and thou shalt hear him calling to thee, and saying, *Come, come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* He calls thee, he intreats thee, he beseecheth thee to come in, and to be reconciled unto the Lord thy God. See and consider well that Scripture, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be you reconciled unto God.* You see he is willing to have sinners reconciled to him, and that he doth manifest by many demonstrations, or evidences.

First, His patience towards thee all this while; he is long suffering, not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Rom. 2. 4. *The goodness of God, or the patience of God doth (or should) lead thee to repentance.*

Secondly, He doth manifest his willingness, in that he hath made this the Master piece of all his
works,

works, to provide a Saviour for us ; in sending his Son, and making him a curse for us ; in this great work the Lord doth proclaim to all the world, *Oh all you people of the World, if I had not been willing to be reconciled to you, or rather to have you reconciled to me, (as I have for ever been) I would never have sent my dearest Son from the bosome of my love, to die for you ; So that this is the greatest work ; all my other works are subordinate to this. In this was the love of God manifested to us, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we should live through him,* 1 John 4. 9.

Thirdly, The Lord doth profess this to the people , that there is no one thing wherein he doth more glory , then to shew mercy to poor sinners, yea to his enemies, Mic. 7. 18. *He delighteth in mercy,* Exod. 34. The Lords glory passed by, and what was that ? *The Lord, the Lord, most merciful and gracious , long-suffering, &c. pardoning iniquity, transgressions and sin.* Here is my glory. Hence it is exprest , Isa. 30. 18. *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious ; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you.* So then, the Lord doth account himself an exalted God, when he hath brought in a sinner to accept of mercy.

Fourthly, The Lord doth express his willingness even with a sigh (as it were) which doth
much

much denote his willingness, Deut. 5. 29. *Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear my Name, and keep my commands; and that for their own good too; for so the words follow, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever. Now these people had said before, Whatsoever the Lord hath spoken, we will do. Oh that there were such an heart in them (saith the Lord.)*

Fifthly, the Lord doth express his willingness with an oath too, and that the greatest that ever he took, that sinners shall not die, Ezek. 33. 10, 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? &c.*

Sixthly, God doth manifest his willingness in this, that above all other works, this work of believing on him is most pleasing to him; and our not believing, is the greatest offence that we can give to God, Joh. 6. 29. *This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent; As if the Lord had said, This doth please me better then any other work. Let a poor soul come in, and roul himself upon the love of God in Christ for reconciliation; this is a more glorious work then the conquering of a whole world. If you give all your goods to the poor, and your*

your bodies to be burnt, all is nothing, if this be wanting, Joh 3. 19. *This is condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness more than light.* In a word, binde all your sins together in a bundle, (except this sin of unbelief) and put them in a ballance together, and put this sin of unbelief in the other ballance, you shall find that unbelief will weigh down all the rest; and from this unbelief, as the root, springs all other evils, as the branches.

Seventhly, Consider further, God doth seek to sinners first; Therefore it is said, the Lord Christ came to seek and to save them that were lost. Isa. 45. 22. *Look unto me and be you saved all ye ends of the earth. The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that is a thirst come, and take of the Waters of life freely.*

Eighthly, Consider, the Lord sends forth his grace to allure thee, and to entice thee, a sinner, to come to him; He doth with cords of love draw the heart to come; He sends forth his mercy to stand before the soul, and tender its service (as it were) to the sinful soul, Hos. 2. 14. *Therefore will I allure them saith the Lord.* There was a great breach between this people and God, as you may see at large in this Chapter; And yet saith the Lord, *I will allure them.* Hos. 11. 4. *I will draw them with the cords of men, with the bands of love.*

B

Ninthly,

Ninthly, the Lord is so yielding unto his creatures, that, to keep his own honour and glory, he cannot yield further. At first, we are all going astray ; the Lord calls us back. 2. We were going to prison ; the Lord steps in, saying, I will provide a Surety. The Covenant of Works requires satisfaction, saith the Lord ; I am content to take this in a Surety. We are like a beggar, begging an alms of one that passeth by ; to whom it is answered, I will give thee, O beggar, that which thou desirest ; but thou must come and fetch it. I cannot come, saith the beggar ; I want legs. I will give thee legs (saith the giver) that thou mayst come. But (saith the beggar) when I am come, I have no hands to receive that which you will give me. I will give thee hands also. Oh, but I want wisdom to make use of that gift ; I will give thee wisdom, saith the Lord. Oh that ever so glorious a God should so far stoop and yield to his poor creatures, as to answer all questions, clear all doubts, and take away all scruples !

Tenthly, he yet comes nearer to a sinner, (as it were) and doth profess, that the greatest sins that ever they have committed against him, shall not hinder them from coming to him, nor him from pardoning them, Isa 1. 18. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord ; though your sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow.*

Oh

Oh here the Lord proclaims, that all thy sins past shall be done away; thy continuance in sin will be thy undoing, if any thing.

Eleventhly, Again consider, the Lord doth in his Word use very powerful arguments to draw the heart to be reconciled to him; He doth not only offer mercy, and set it before the soul, but he doth labour with strong reasons, and arguments, and motives, to draw the soul to himself, and doth use these arguments that will take the heart most. Sometimes he doth draw arguments from his equity, Ezek. 18. 25. *Are not my Waies equal, saith the Lord?* Sometimes from our necessity, John 3. 26. *He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him.* Sometimes from the benefit and profit we shall have, if we do come in, Prov. 1. 23. *Turn ye at my reproof, and behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my Words unto you.* O blessed promise! one would think this should break the heart of Devils; as if the Lord had said, Well, though thou hast been a great sinner, and though thou hast rebelled against me ever since thou wast born; yet if thou wilt but turn at my reproof, or say to thy God, Turn us, and we shall be turned, (for I must do it) I will pour out my Spirit upon thee, I will give grace and glory, a House, a City, a Kingdom, Life, and all things; The Lord

doth seem to out-bid all other comforts that we have in sin ; therefore he doth tell us of honey, milk, rayment, such things as do most take with our hearts, that so he might gain us to come in, and be at one with him. Now I shall appeal to your consciences, that have felt this in some measure ; Doth not the Devil come with strong arguments ? The World with the like ? And wicked men with strong perswasions ? The corruptions within you with strong motives ? And yet doth not the Lord out-bid them all, and so win the soul to himself ?

Twelfthly, Consider further, The Lord comes and answers all objections that lie in the hearts of sinners.

Object. 1. Saith one, I am unworthy ; I have nothing in me that good is.

Ans. The Lord saith, Isa. 55. *Come, and buy milk and wine, without money, and without price ;* three times it is spoken in one or two verses. So that God doth set forth his Kingdom by milk, wine, and bread, things useful for the body ; sometimes by a marriage, sometimes by a supper, wherein are all kinds of dainties ; sometimes he doth invite them to the supper, and to the marriage of his Son, and sometimes doth compel them to come in. Then the Devil working with our corrupt nature, doth what he can to make the soul slight the Gospel, and to look upon the blood

blood of the Covenant as a mean thing : When the soul doth begin indeed to apprehend the greatness and sweetness of the Gospel of glad tydings, then steps in Sathan ; What, such a one as thou have such mercy ? Fellow sinners, mark the policy of the subtil Devil ; he doth at first labour to set at nought the Gospel, accounting it as a mean thing : But when the Lord doth shine through that mist, and shew the soul the excellency of his Son, and the glory of the Gospel ; then comes the Devil the other way, saying, with thee these be great things indeed ; But thou art vile and base, both in thy principles and practice ; and canst thou think that God ever intended these things to thee ? *What, to such a one as thou art ?* Then the Lord answereth for thee, *Come, without money, and without price ;* as if he had said, Though thou hast no ability to do any thing ; yet come, I will make thee rich enough ; thou hast no money, (that is, no self-righteousness) let not that hinder, Revel. 22. 17. *The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that hears come, and let him that is a thirst come, and Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

Object. It may be (saith the soul) though the Lord doth require nothing beforehand, yet when I am come, he will require hard things of me ; I must live so strictly, and abandon all my pleasures ;

fures: What, shall I leave all those pleasant waies, and have nothing but according to the Word, and according to Conscience? Then farewell all the comfort and joy of all our life, if we come to this once.

Ans. I appeal to you, whether your hearts have not been kept off by such things as these. But now (O fellow-sinners) mark how Christ doth take off these Objections, Mat. 11. *Come unto me, and I will give you Rest. Take my yoke upon you: (and mark what follows:) my yoke is easie, and my burden light.* As if Christ should say, I will lay no yoke upon you but what is easie; nor any burden but what is light. And this I affirm, Though this may seem to be hard to you at first, you will finde the waies of God more easie then ever you found the waies of sin. Do but ask them that have any experience of the love of God to them, and they will tell thee, that they have found more sweetness in one day in following God, then they found in the waies of sin many years: Prov. 3. 17. *Her waies are waies of pleasantness, and all her paths are peaceable paths.* Now, if you will believe the Spirit of God, you see there is more peace, more joy, more sweetness, more comfort then ever you had before.

13. Again consider, The Lord doth not only use strong Arguments, and answer all Objections,

Sions, but he is importunate too ; as first, he doth cry out after sinners, *Prov. 1. Wisdom cryeth in the streets.* And so *Prov. 9.* and *Isa. 54.* he doth make proclamation, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come.* He doth importune, and bid come over and over, again and again; *Come, come, come,* three times together. So that God doth seek more earnestly to sinners, then they do to him. It may be thou wilt seek to God once for a mercy thou wantest, and give over ; but behold, God calls to thee again and again, *Come, come, come.*

14. If all this will not prevail with sinners to come in, yet the Lord leaves them not, but appeals to the very consciences of sinners, and deals with them that way. If you were in great distress concerning your estate, or life, and you go to a man that hath both wisdom and power to help you, and open the case to him, but cannot prevail ; then you bring strong arguments ; and they do not move ; then you take away all objections, but yet prevail not ; then you importune him, and urge your arguments again and again ; and all this doth not prevail ; then you appeal to his own conscience, whether you have not spoken right to him, saying, I will even leave this to your own conscience to judge of it ; and this many times doth prevail, when nothing else will. Even thus (of all the world) doth God deal with sin-

ners, and appeal to their own conscience, Isa. 43. 26. *Put me in remembrance, let us plead together. Declare thou, that thou maist be justified.* As if the Lord had said, if thou canst declare any thing why thou dost not come, that lyeth in thy way, I will remove it, and thou shalt be accepted. Jer. 2. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me?* Verse 31. *Have I been a barren Wilderness to Israel?* Ezek. 18. 25. *Hear now, O house of Israel, are not my wayes equal? are not your wayes unequal?* As if the Lord had said, Do you think in your conscience that these waies that you walk in are right? Is this equal, that sinners should go on their daies, and pass their time in sin, and when they can sin no longer, then to plead for mercy? Is this equal? If this will not do, the Lord will say, Conscience, let him alone: so conscience may be quiet, but the Lord hath left pleading with him.

15. Again, the Lord hath many times broke forth into tears, to see the stubbornness of mens hearts: *O Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, &c.* If thou hadst known in this thy day the things that make for thy peace. Now, suppose that Christ should come and weep over a company of poor sinners, as he did over *Jerusalem*, saying, *O thou sinful soul, hadst thou known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace:*

peace: and suppose thou shouldest see one tear trickling down after another, and he should say, Oh that this people did but know the things that belong unto their peace! if thou hadst a heart of stone, it could not but melt.

16. The Lord doth foresee what a little honour he shall have of this sinner, when he hath brought him home: he seeth still, that thou wilt have abundance of corruption in thy heart, and that thou wilt grieve his holy Spirit, and walk very offensively, dishonour the way of Religion, and open the mouths of the enemies, as *David*: I say, God doth foresee, that after he hath taken all this pains to bring thee unto himself, what a little honour he shall have by thee; and yet he doth perswade thee to come: This also doth note his willingness to save thee.

Lastly, consider, that after the Lord, our tender Father, hath used all these means, and many more to bring in sinners, yet he is contented to wait a long time upon sinners, and to take advantages to win them, *Isa. 30. 18. The Lord doth wait, that he may be gracious unto you.* O how many years hath the Lord waited upon me, and thee, and other sinners! How long hath he knocked, and yet we let him stand at the door! O *Jerusalem*, wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be? *Isaiah 51. 17, 18. I smote him, and he went on frowardly; but I have seen his waies,*
and

and will heal him, and restore comfort to him, and to his mourners. Though he went on frowardly, I will restore comfort to him.

Now, put all this together, and see how infinitely willing God is to save thee, O thou drooping sinner.

Quest. If any should ask a reason, why God is so importunate, and desirous to draw up sinners to himself?

Ans. 1. The ground of the love is in himself, and I can give no reason of it, but the same that he hath left upon record, *Exod. 33. 19. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.*

2. He doth this, because mercy pleaseth him, *Mic. 7. 18. I will pardon, because mercy pleaseth me, saith the Lord.* Now then, that that doth please a man he is ever desirous after; The Scripture saith, *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, but he sheweth mercy willingly, because he delighteth in it.*

3. The blood of Christ, his onely Son, doth cry aloud in the ears of the Lord for mercy; and that obedience of Christ, wherewith the Lord is satisfied, is so well pleasing to him, that whatsoever this blood doth plead for, God must needs grant. Now, the blood of Christ crieth mercy, mercy, Lord, for sinners; the blood of *Abel* cryed vengeance, vengeance; but the blood of Christ

Christ speaketh better things, and cryeth pardon, pardon. Nothing in the world can stop the current of Gods mercy to a people, when it doth come to the blood of Christ: Then saith the Father of mercies, open all the flood gates now, and let mercy be shewed in the highest degree, seeing the blood of my Son cryeth for this: Though this be wonderfull mercy, to pardon such a great sinner, there is not a drop only, but a Sea of mercy, to cleanse thee thoroughly. Come, saith the Lord, *let us reason together; though your sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow*, Isa. 1. 18. *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own name sake, and will not remember thy sins*, Isa. 43. 25. *Put me in remembrance, saith the Lord, put me in remembrance of this my promise, and let us plead together, saith the Lord. Declare these words with thy mouth, that I have put into thy heart, that thou maist be justified*, Isa. 43. 26.

O thou troubled sinner (for to thee I speak) I mean thee, to whom sin is a burden; see how our tender Father hath dealt with our brother Prodigal, Luke 15. 28. *He arose and came to his Father; but when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.*

1. Take notice, his Father sees him, before he sees.

sees his Father. No sooner doth a sinner think of looking toward heaven, but the Lord spies him, and pities him.

2. He saw him whiles he was yet a great way off, he was but in the beginning of his way to come; his Father might have let him alone till he had been come quite home to his house, and it had been singular mercy to have bidden him welcome then; but it is done whiles he is a great way off. So, thou art at a great distance from the mercy of God in thy apprehension; that is, thou canst not believe, nor scarce hope in his mercy; yet he will draw nigh to thee.

3. The Scripture saith, his father had compassion on him. I see the Lords bowels yearn, work, and stir within him at the sight of his Son, Jer. 3. 20. *Therefore my bowels are troubled for him I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.* Jer. 9. 24. *I delight in loving kindness.* Mic. 7. 18. *He pardoneth, because mercy pleaseth him.*

4. It is said, that his father ran. How rich, abundant mercy had it been in his father, though he had stood still till his Son had come to him! *But what mercy is this!* He will go towards him, and give him a meeting. *O mercy!* that his father ran not from him; but what mercy call you this, that he runs to him! Why, would it not have served (if he would needs go meet him) to have walked towards him with a soft and

grave

grave pace? No, no, that will not serve the Lords turn; if a Sinner will but go towards the Lord, mercy will not go a foot-pace, but runs to meet him; yea, mercy draws him, and puts him upon coming at first step. The sons pace is, he arose and came; he came walking towards his father. This is the fathers pace, he *ran*; the son most needed to have run; his belly was pinched with hunger, yet he only walks, but his father runs: bowels full of mercy, out pace bowels pinched with hunger.

5. I see him falling upon his neck, that is, he hugged, and embraced him; how? fall on his neck? Who would not have been loath to have touched him? yea, to come near him? Is he not in his loathsome stinking rags? Smells he not of the Swine he kept? Could a man come near him without stopping his Nose? Would not a man be ready to cast up his stomach upon such an embracement? Mercy is not nice and dainty. Will God thus embrace a Prodigal in his loathsome rags? Oh sinner, be encouraged to draw near to God; for the worst of all wickedness and baseness in the world cannot make him reject thee, Ezek. 16. 4, 5, 6.

6. But yet behold a greater wonder then all the rest; I see him *kissing his Son*. Who could have brooked to have embraced a person in so filthy a pickle? much less would any one kiss such

such a one : What, kifs those lips that had been so lately a lapping in the hogs-trough ? those lips that had so often kifs'd those base and beggarly harlots ? Kifs him ! A man would rather have thought he would have kick'd him; and yet his Father kisseth him. There is a passage somewhat like this, Gen. 33. 4. *And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kisseth him.* A strange and wonderfull thing, that he that had threatned to kill him, and came now upon that errand, to kill him and all his, that his heart should be so strangely altered by God, that killing should be turned into kissing. It was very strange that *Esau* should kifs *Jacob*; but it is more strange here, that this Father should kifs this Prodigal.

Read and consider well these Scriptures.

John 1. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.*

Luk. 2. 10, 11. *Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all people: That is, that unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

John 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to this end, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have life everlasting.*

John 3. 17. *God sent not his Son into the world*

World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved.

1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a true saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*

Heb. 13. 12. *Jesus, that he might sanctifie the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

1 John 2. 1, 2. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.*

Rev. 5. 8. *Thou wast killed, and hast redeemed us to God, out of every kindred, tongue, and people.*

Plal. 145. 10. *He will fulfil the desires of them that fear him.*

Zech. 13. 1. *The Lord hath opened a fountain for sin, and for uncleanness.*

Isa. 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come then.*

Mat. 5. 6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst; for they shall be filled.*

John 7. 37, 38. *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.*

John 6. 37. *And he that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast off. Oh mark; I will in no wise cast him off. That is, there is no corruption in*

in thee, nor all thy enemies without thee, that shall so far prevail with me, as that I shall forsake thee.

Oh then come unto me, come unto me, *All you that are heavy laden, and I will undoubtedly give you rest.*

1. Consider, He that hath made these promises, is able to make them good.

2. He is not only able to do it, but he is willing to do it; he delights in it.

3. He is not only able and willing, but he is faithfull too in keeping promise; in so much that not one tittle shall fail of all that he hath promised: He never saith, *Seek ye me in vain.*

1 Take notice, the Lord keeps open house, Rev. 22. 17. *Let him that will, come and take of the Water of life freely.*

2. Because of our backwardness to come, he invites, Isa. 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come.*

3. He answereth objections, and taketh away all excuses, in these words, *Come without money, and without price*; though thou hast not righteousness to commend thee to me, yet come, *without money, and without price.*

4. He assures thee, thou shalt be welcome, Joh. 6. 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast off.*

5. He tels thee, that if thou come, thou shalt not

not lose thy labour ; *He will give thee rest*, Matth. 11. 28.

He will give thee rest from thine own righteousness, that thou shalt see thy acceptance in the righteousness of another, and so cease from thine own. He will give thee rest, that is, he will still those troubles that arise in thine heart, and take off those vails from thine eyes, and the bondage that lay upon thy heart, and shew thee that he hath set thee free from hell, death, law, sin past, present, and to come ; and so gives thee Faith, which *is the evidence of things not seen*, which will evidence this to thy soul. Thy soul no sooner apprehends this, but presently it will be ready to break forth in these words of *Mary*, Luke 1. 46, 47, 48. *My soul doth magnifie the Lord, my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour : for He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaid.* &c.

And now to draw to a conclusion : for (as I said in the beginning) I have but *A Word to the World* : 1. He gives free liberty to come. 2. He invites thee. 3. He will bid thee welcome. 4. He will ease thee of all thy troubles.

Object. But thou wilt say, Here are indeed sweet rules, and blessed promises amongst these things that you have laid down ; but I have no ability to walk in the one, nor heart to embrace or believe the other : and I finde it written.

Jer. 10. 23. The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Ans. But consider, he requires nothing of thee, but what he hath promised he will enable thee to do. For instance, *Isaiah 1. 16.* he requires thee, and saith, *Wash thee, and make thee clean; put away the evil of thy doings; cease to do evil, learn to do well.* Here is his precept, and thy duty. Now turn from this precept, to that promise, *Jer. 33. 8. I will cleanse them from all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me.* Now when thou goest about that duty required, and findest thy self unable, then look to that same promise; and in the apprehension thereof, thy soul shall look up, and go about the work in the strength (not of thy self, but) of the mighty God of grace, who hath spoken, and will do it for thee. So for Repentance; he commands thee to repent, *Acts 17. 30.* Thou goest about it, but findest the work of Repentance (true and unfeigned) too hard for thee to perform; then turn from this Precept, to that Promise, *Acts 5. 31.* And when thou there seest, that he that hath commanded thee to repent, even the God of power and truth, and that cannot lie, hath engaged himself to enable thee to the performance thereof, wilt thou not be encouraged?

Again, he commands thee, *not to let sin reign*

in thee, Rom. 6. 12. And is not the promise nigh thee, (vers 14.) that it shall not reign in thee?

Object. Thou wilt say, These promises indeed are made to the Elect, and to Saints.

Ans. Let that be granted; yet art thou excluded? Canst thou say thou art not elected? How wilt thou prove it? Wilt thou dive into the secret counsel of God? it is too deep for thee to fathom. Dost thou complain that thy wicked life doth evidence it? Well, consider then, Hast thou denied Christ? So did *Peter*. Hast thou persecuted Christ? Did not *Paul* so? And yet for all this, were not they elected? In a word, there is not a man, or woman, under the whole heavens, can justly or truly say, He or she is not elected. Of this, many reasons and testimonies might be given; but I would not be tedious.

He commands thee to love him with all thy heart, with all thy strength, and with all thy soul, *Deut.* 10. 12. and *Deut.* 30. 6. the Lord comes in with his promise, saying, *I will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live.* He commands (*Col.* 3. 5.) to mortify thy earthly members which are upon the earth, &c. And (*Mic.* 7. 19.) he undertakes the work: *He will subdue our iniquities, and cast all our sins into the depth of the Sea.*

2 Cor. 13. 2. The Lord saith by *Paul*, *Thou must*

keep in memory what is preached unto thee. But thou wilt say (as most do) thou canst not remember: Then have recourse to that Promise, *Joh. 14. 14, 26.* There the Lord undertakes and promiseth to thee, saying, *He will teach thee all things, and bring all things to thy remembrance, whatsoever he hath said unto thee.* So David (Psal 25. 5.) intreats the Lord to teach and instruct him in his way. And in *Psal. 25. 12.* the Lord undertakes the Work. And *Psal. 32. 8.* the Lord saith to him, *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* And so for all things whatsoever the Lord thy God requireth of thee in any Scripture: in the same or another Scripture he comes in with his sweet and blessed promises of Assistance, to enable thee unto it. He knows right well as saith *Jeremiah* (Chap. 10. 23.) *The way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps.* In a word, Consider, There be many of the greatest Promises amidst the greatest Precepts. So *Deut. 10. 20.* he commands thee to fear him. And *Jer. 32. 39.* he comes with a sweet Promise, saying, *I will give thee an heart to fear me.* And in another Scripture, *I will put my Fear into your hearts.* Truly, Friend, the Consideration of this will sweeten all the Commands of the Lord unto thee, and it will cause thee to set about what is required in the strength

strength (not of thy self, but) of the Lord: Then go on, and be strong in him, and in the power of his might. Now to draw to a conclusion, consider these particulars.

First, that if after all these sweet encouragements, invitations, intreatings, perswasions, beseechings, thou continue still in unbelife, and wilt not come to him, that thou maist have life, although he doth protest, that him that doth come to him, he will in no wise cast out, *Joh. 6. 37.* it is the greatest of thy sins; and it may be thou shalt hear the Lords voice changed, and telling thee, *The ax is laid to the root of the tree, and he that brings not forth good fruit, shall be hewen down, and cast into the fire.* Or suppose thou shouldst hear him saying to thee, as once he was to *Jerusalem*, *Mat. 23. 37.* *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens, but ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.* *Prov. 1. 24, 25.* *Because i have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; ver. 26.* *I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.* Read and well consider that in *Heb. 12. 16, 17.* *Esau* having slighted and undervalued his Birthright, would afterwards have repented, but could not, though he sought it with tears. Therefore, *To day if you will hear his voice, barden not your hearts.*

Secondly, Consider, the day is at hand, in which, all the Nations of the World; all the Tribes, Kinreds, and Tongues under the Heavens, that now are, ever were, or shall be; I say all, both small and great, shall be gathered together before the judgement-seat of Christ, *Mat.* 25. 32, 33, 24. &c. Yea, the Sea shall give up her dead, and the grave shall give up her dead; death and hell shall give up their dead, *Rev.* 20. 12, 13, 14. In another place, we read, That we shall all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, and all that ever thou hast done, good or evil, shall be laid open before all the world; all thy sins, secret and open, shall be brought to light, and thou shalt be judged according to thy works, *Mat.* 25. 32, 33, 34, 35. *Rev.* 20. 12, 13. Then, when the secrets of all hearts are laid open, if thou art found to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that thou hast made him thy confidence, then thou shalt, in that terrible day stand up with boldness, 1 *Joh.* 4. 17. And thy Judge, (which is thy Saviour) shall say to thee, as in *Mat.* 25. 34. *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit ye the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.* Then shall all tears be wiped from thine eyes, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away; there shall be ease without pain; beauty without blemish; credit without disgrace: In a word, thy priviledges and enjoyments, shall be

so great, as the heart of man cannot conceive, much less his tongue report: for thou shalt be like him, 1 *Joh* 3. 2.

But if thy name be not written in the Lambs book; if thou continuest still in unbelief, and endest thy dayes with an evil life: Oh what a terrible day will this be unto thee! 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. The Heavens shall be on fire and dissolve, the earth also it shall melt with fervent heat: Then if the rocks and mountains might fall on thee, thou wouldst think it a favour, to hide thee from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; *For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall abide it?* *Rev.* 6. 16, 17, &c. Then shalt thou hear that dreadful sentence pass on thee; *Mat.* 25 41. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Consider a little this doleful sentence.

1. Thou must depart from the presence of the Lord.

2. Thou departest (not blessed, but) a cursed wretch. *Depart from me ye cursed.*

3. Not onely into fire, but into everlasting fire; no hope of returning.

4. The companions that thou shalt have there, are the Devil and his Angels, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* And this dreadful

day will come as a thief in the night, 2 Pet. 3. 10. in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the element shall melt with fervent heat; and the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, &c. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved (ver. 11.) What manner of persons ought you to be, in all holy conversation, and godliness? Oh then take heed; Watch and pray: for you know not how neer the time is. Mar. 13. 33. The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, 1 Thel. 5. 2. Wherefore (beloved) seeing that you look for such things, be diligent, that you may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 2 Pet. 3. 14.

Thirdly, consider, if it should be a few months, or yeers, before this great and terrible day come; yet it may not, for ought that thou knowest, be many days, no not so much as many hours or minutes before thy particular end come, in which thou shalt be gasping for life, and breathing out thy last breath. If then thou look up, God will appear as an angry Judge; If thou look down, the bottomless pit will strike terror into thee; on thy right hand, thy sins stand accusing thee; on thy left hand, the devil is ready to execute Gods eternal sentence upon thee; within thee, thy conscience gnawing; without thee, thy friends bewailing. So that look which way

way thou wilt ; above thee , beneath thee , within thee , without thee , every object will adde to thy misery. Therefore, Oh remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before these evil days come, Eccl. 12. 1. Intreat the Lord , as David did, Psal. 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.* And wilt thou know how frail thou art, O vain man? Then consider,

One Scripture saith of thy days, *It is as water spilt upon the ground,* 2 Samuel 14. 14. Another Scripture saith , *Our days are like a shadow,* Psalm 102. 11. And , as if that were too long, Job saith (Job 7. 7.) *My life is but a wind.* Psalm 102. 2. *Our days consume like smoke.* We all do fade as a leaf, Isaiah 64. 6. *All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth , and the flower thereof falleth away,* 1 Pet. 1. 24. And as if all these resemblances signified too much length, to hold forth the shortness of our life, the holy Ghost doth contract it shorter, Psalm 39. 5. *Thou hast made my days as an hands bredth.* And as if that resemblance also were too long, he saith in the same verse, *Mine age is as nothing.* Well then, doth the Scripture in many places say, *We are like a bubble of the brook, a tale that is told, or a dream?* O how should the serious consideration

tion hereof, teach thee so to number thy days, that thou mightest apply thine heart to true and perfect wisdom. Or, as the Wise man saith, Eccel. 12. 6. *Remember thy Creator before the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken: for as Death leaves thee, so Judgement will finde thee, &c.* In a word, it is a point of high wisdom, to be often thinking and meditating of our later end; for the Lord himself saith, Deut. 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, to consider their later end!* So he that made thee, teach and perfect thee.

Two Words to those chosen out of the W O R L D.

NOW I shall come to speak two Words to those that are chosen out of the world.

First, Generally, to all the Saints.

Secondly, More particularly, to the Saints under those Titles or Forms by which they are most commonly known.

1. The Word in general, to all that are truly godly, (for now to you I speak) even to you, my fellow-members, and brethren in Christ ;
Awake, awake, put on thy strength O Sion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, thou holy Cite,

tie, Isa. 52.1. *Arise my beloved and come away,* Cant. 2.10, 12. *For the day is dawning, and the day-star arising in your hearts,* 2 Pet. 1.1.

O Saints ! consider a little upon what ground you stand, upon what foundation you are built. Dost thou believe there was such a Christ as the Scriptures mention ? Dost thou believe that this Christ took thy Nature, and also thy Sins ? Dost thou believe, that in this thy nature he fulfilled the Law, took it away, nailed it to the Cross, and so is become *the end of the Law to all that believe* ? Also, freed thee from sin past, present, and to come, and so from death, the wages thereof ? Dost thou conceive, that God will make good his gracious promises ? in particular these, *Isa. 25. 7, 8. &c. He will destroy in this mountain, the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all Nations ; He will swallow up death in victory. And the Lord God will wipe away all tears from off all faces ; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away, from off all the earth.* Dost thou believe that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters the sea ; and that we shall all know him, from the greatest to the least ? *Jer. 31.34.* Dost thou believe those words which the Lord spake to Daniel, Chap. 7. 27. *And the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens, (mark this*

this word, under the whole heavens) shall be given to the people of the Saints ; for their Kingdome is an everlasting Kingdome, and all dominions shall serve and obey them. Dost thou believe those words, Isaiah 30. 26. Moreover the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun shall be sevenfold ? Dost thou believe, That the Lord will wipe away all tears from off all faces, and that there shall be no more sorow nor crying ; neither shall there be any more pains ? Revel. 21. 4. Dost thou believe what the Lord saith in Isaiah 5. 10. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to S I O N with Songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness ; and sorrow and sighing shall flie away. Dost thou believe the Lord will heal all our back-slidings , all our distractions , and compose all our differences, and give all his people one heart . and one way ? Jeremiah 32. 39. Read understandingly that, Isaiah 11. 6, 7, 8, 9. The Woolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf and the young Lion, and the fatling together ; and the Cow and the Bear shall feed their young, and lie down together. And the Lion shall eat straw like the Oxe, and the sucking childe shall play on the hole of the Asse, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice

trice den: They shall not hurt nor destroy in all mine holy mountain: for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea. Light is sown for the Righteous; and gladness for the upright in heart. Isa. 7. 9, 11, 12. Therefore rejoyce in the Lord ye Righteous and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. These (and many Scriptures more which for brevity I omitt) do shew thee O most noble overcoming Saint, that glorious times are coming: wherefore gird up the loyns of thy mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto thee at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 1. 13. And when he is revealed, amongst many mercies which thou shalt receive, I will only mention two.

First, He shall appear without sin, and thou shalt appear so in him. Heb. 9 ult.

Secondly, Thou shalt be like him: for thou shalt see him as he is. 1. John 3. 2. & c. Then when thy soul apprehends this, it will even break forth into Praises and Songs of Deliverance, as once David. God let in a Light, whereby he saw his sins pardoned, Psal. 103. 1, 2, 3, 4. Bless the Lord O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name; Bless the Lord O my Soul and forget not all his Benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy Diseases: Who redeemeth thy life from Death: Who crowneth

est thee with loving kindness and tender mercies. If thou ask why I cite so many Scriptures, and not explain them, I answer, Remember to whom I speak, that is, to the chosen generation, to the Saints enlightned, and they have the sum of them opened to them already, or at least they have the Spirit of God in them, which is the truest Key to unfold or unlock the mystery of them unto them.

Object. 2. But I suppose that many of these forementioned promises were made unto particular Saints, as to the Jews, or the like, and so have been fulfilled to them; and if so, then what matter of comfort can they administer unto me?

Ans. Suppose it were so, that they be fulfilled already; (which I know most do say) yet in some measure (through Gods goodness) I do know the contrary; they are wholly, or for the greatest part yet to be fulfilled, as I could prove by Scripture; but I forbear, because I would not be tedious. But suppose they were made to some particular Saints, and fulfilled to them; yet they are in whole, or in part, applyable unto thee; as to instance in one Scripture for all, *Josh. 1. 5.* The Lord promiseth *Joshua*, *That he would never leave him, nor forsake him.* And the Apostle in *Hebrews 13. 5.* preisseth the Saints to make use of, and to lay hold on that promise, as made to them, though it was made to *Joshua* many hundred years before.

Object.

Object. 3. If they be yet to be fulfilled, it is a great question whether I shall live to see any of them fulfilled; and then what comfort do they hold forth to me?

Answer. If thou dost not live to see them fulfilled with thy bodily eyes, yet with the eye of faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, (*with natural eyes*) Heb. 11. 1. thou maist see them fulfilled to thee: as the Saints, Heb. 11. 13. *They all dyed in the Faith, not having received the Promises; but having seen them afar off, and were perswaded of them, and embraced them; that is, they lived in the enjoyment of them, in the Spirit.* Again, 1 *Thes.* 4. 16, 17. there are promises made; one, *That the dead in Christ shall rise first;* and another, *That we shall ever be with the Lord.* And in the 18. verse, he commands the Saints, *That they should comfort one another with these words.* Then (in one word) this is the summe to be learned from hence; that we should not only rejoyce in the present enjoyments, but live in a full expectation of (and comfort in) what we shall shortly enjoy; *And comfort one another with these words.*

Is not that time drawing near, which is prophesied of, Revel. 11. 15. *And the seventh Angel sounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his*

his Son Christ, and he shall reign for evermore. Wherefore, most noble overcoming Saints, Servants of the most high and mighty God, look for great alterations, and mighty changes; See what desolations God will make in the earth; when he hath accomplished his work upon mount Sion, then he will judge the mountain of *Esau*; that is, when God hath fully brought up his people to enjoy nothing but himself, then he will declare himself to be a God taking vengeance on his, and our enemies. Wherefore rejoyce, O you Saints, for the time of your singing is come. The day of our redemption is appearing. Howl, O *Babylon*; Mourn, O thou proud opposer of Christ: thy pride is falling, thy end is coming; Who will mourn for thee? Then shall all thy lovers stand afar off, for fear of thy torments; they stand far off, they will not come neer to comfort thee. Be silent then, O all flesh; for the Lord is risen out of his holy habitation. Then wilt thou break forth, as in *Isa. 25. 9*. And it shall be said in that day, *This is our God, we have waited for him; This is our Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad, and rejoyce in his salvation.* Then by this glorious appearing, he will destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all Nations, and he will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.

faces, and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth : for the Lord hath spoken it, *Isaiah 25. 7, 8.* O Saints, *lift up your heads; your redemption draws nigh:* and now will our God make good to us that which is written, *Zepheniah 3. 9.* *I will turn the people of pure language, and they shall serve me with one consent.* This pure language, is the language of the Spirit.

It is appointed by God, to put an end to these divisions : not till then shall the envy of *Ephraim* depart, and the enemies of *Judah* be cut off; *Ephraim* not envy *Judah*, nor *Judah* vex *Ephraim*. Then the Kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom shall be given to the Kingdom of the Saints; whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom; and all dominions shall serve and obey them, *Dan. 7. 27.* Then the Nations that will not serve thee, (that is, Christ in the Saints) shall perish, *Isaiah 60. 12.* Now, God having given you all one heart, and one way, as it is written, *Jer. 32. 29.* now shall be brought to pass that saying, *Isaiah 11. 6, 7, 8.* *The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, &c.* Verse 9. *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea. The envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adver-*

series of Judah shall be cut off; Then all you, the Israel of God, shall have your fathers Law written in your hearts. Then you shall cease teaching one another, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all of them know me; from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord, Jer. 31. 34.

My dear friends. I have much more to write unto you of these things; but being more straitened in time, then in love, at present I shall pass by many things; First, concerning the restitution of all things, spoken of *Rom. 8. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.* and *Acts 3. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.* And so in many other Scriptures, which for present I omit; and then, what shall follow upon the restitution of all things, *Rev. 11. 15. Rev. 21. 2, 3, 4.* These things were in my heart to write of distinctly, seeing that all, as well Saints as sinners, are extremely ignorant of these things, though most clearly held forth in Scripture, that a man can hardly speak of them, though he speaks no more then the History holds forth, but one is offended, and another is troubled; therefore at present I am silent therein; As our Lord said, I have more things to speak, but ye cannot bear them now; and this Scripture likewise, *Hast thou faith? have it to thyself, &c.* So I pass by that which thou shalt shortly enjoy, and come to speak a few words of what many of the Saints do already enjoy; and oh that all the Saints did but truly consider these
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ensuing things, which I never received of man, neither was I taught them by man, but of God alone !

Thou art a believer, consider :

1. The Law that thou hast broken, Christ hath kept, fulfilled, and taken away.

2. Thy sins which were many, both original and actual, of omission and commission, thy sins past, those present, and those to come, are all laid upon Christ, and the wages due to them he received.

3. Consider upon what account thou now standest before the Father, not of thine own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ.

4. Consider, That thou being made free from sin, dost reckon thy self so, *Rom. 6. 11. Likewise reckon your selves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.*

5. When thou art thus built upon Christ, and thus grounded in him, *Ephes. 3. 18, 19.* Then thou shalt be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the height, and depth, breadth, and length of his love, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

Now follows the fruit of this knowledge : The soul that is enlightened will not go on in sin, but the love of Christ will constrain him from a course of sin. I shall speak a word to every one of these particulars, briefly and plainly.

1. Of the first. The Law that thou hast broken, Christ hath kept, fulfilled, and taken away. The Law required obedience of thee; Christ comes and yields obedience for thee, and imputes it to thee, Rom. 5. 19. *As by the disobedience of one, many are made sinners: so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous*; the Law required the keeping of every tittle of the first and second Table; Christ comes and walks up to it step by step; So that the Law could no sooner require obedience, but presently Christ yields obedience, as it was in the Old Testament prophesied, and in the New testified of him. The Law required an holy life, Christ lived an holy life; the Law required perfect obedience, as well in the principles as in the practice; Christ yields it in both; the Law requires death for the least disobedience; and though Christ had not broken in it any tittle, yet he representing the persons of those that had broken it, became obedient unto the Law in this also, Phil. 2. 8. *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross*; and that the Law is done away by Christ, see 2 Cor. 3. four times in that chapter it is said to be done away. Also Rom. 7. Rom. 10. 4. And so the 2. 3. 4. Chap. to the Galatians, and many other Scriptures.

2. Consider, Thy sins which are many, both
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original and actual, of omission of commission, against the first Table or the second, thy sins past, present, and to come, are all laid upon Christ, and the wages due to them he received, *Isaiah 53. 6. And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* 1 *Pet. 2. 24. Who himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, &c.* 2 *Cor. 5. 21. He hath made him to be sin for us, that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* *Mat. 8. 17. Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*

3. Consider, Upon what account you stand before the Father, viz. not of your own righteousness, but upon the account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ: 1 *Cor. 1. 30. He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption,* *Phil. 3. 9. And be found in him not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness of God by Faith.*

4. Consider, If the Law be fulfilled, thy sins pardoned, and thou now standest before thy Father by the righteousness of another; Then thou canst not but look upon thy self as free from sin, and to break forth, as in *Rom. 6. 11. Likewise, reckon your selves dead unto sin indeed, but alive unto God. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness,* *Romans 6. 18. But now being made free from sin,*

and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6. 22. Col. 1. 22. He hath reconciled you in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable, and unreprouable in his sight, 1 Theff. 3. 13. Now one that is, 1. Holy, 2. Unblamable, 3. Unreprouable, must needs be free from sin.

5. When thou art thus rooted and grounded in love, thou shalt be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the bredth, and length, and height, and depth: and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, Ephes. 3. 18. So shalt thou be filled with all the fulness of God, verse 19. Methinks I see many of the Saints even breaking forth in the language of Mary, Luke 1. 46, 47, 48. *My soul doth magnifie the Lord, my spirit doth rejoyce in God my Saviour: (and then gives occasion of this joy:) for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaid.* The tongue of the dumb doth begin to sing, the eyes of the blinde to be opened, and the ears of the deaf to hear. Read the 35. of *Isaiah*; that whole Chapter briefly and plainly lays down, by way of prophesie, that he, our tender Father, is bringing down the mighty from their seat, and exalting them of low degree; yea, he rebuketh Kings for your sakes. Your God is no respecter of persons; If Kings and Princes rebel against him,

him, and his chosen ones, he will bring down their heads as low as the Block. And if these great ones endeavor to separate God and his people, God will separate their heads from their bodies. You see these Days of Ours do witness to this. In a word, he is pulling down the kingdoms of men, and setting up the Kingdom of his dear Son. And how doth the brutish Malignant rage, and the poor blind Presbyterian murmur at the going on of God's work! Let me say to both, as Prov. 1. 22. *How long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity!* What do you not know that God hath an Attribute of Justice, that he will magnific, as well as that of his Mercy? If he afflict his own dear Children, whom he so loves, will he not execute Vengeance on his Adversaries? Be silent then, all Flesh, before him: For the Lord will bring to pass his Work, yea, his strange Work: truly, Justice hath no respect of persons: wherefore turn your murmuring and repining, into rejoicing and thanksgiving, for the judgements of God upon the enemies of his truth. O you most noble overcoming Saints, servants of the most high God, you shall judge Angels, as well as earthly Kings: your Father loves you, and therefore he will honour you: (nay he doth honour thee already) *Those that honour me, I will honour, saith the Lord.*

1. He calls thee his servant ; and that is a great honour to be a servant to so heavenly a Prince. But, as if that were too little,

2. He calls you his chosen ones, his friends, *Joh. 15. 15.*

3. He calls you his Brethren and Sisters, *Heb. 2. 11.*

4. He calls you his Sons and Daughters, a more near relation. Yet, as if that were a stile too low to express his tender love unto you,

5. He calls you his Spouse, and Wife, *Rev. 21. 9.*

6. He calls you Members of his own Body, *1 Cor. 12. 12.*

7. He tells you, you are Co-heirs with himself, *Rom. 8. 17.*

8. He tells you that the glory that the Father gave to him, he hath given to you ; that you may be one, as the Father and he are one.

9. He tells you, that you are not onely one in the Body, but one in the Spirit also, *1 Cor. 6. 17.*

10. And lastly, he tells you, that this is but a short taste of what you shall be, *1 Joh. 3. 1, 2.*

How will the consideration of these near Relations cause you to break forth with the holy Ghost? *1 Joh. 4. 17. As he is, so are we in this present world.* Or, as in *Heb. 2. 11. Both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all one.* Again, hence it is that the Lord saith,

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He that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of mine eye. In a word, the Lord takes all the wrongs done to any of his, as done to himself. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

Again, consider, as thy most wise God turns all things to his own glory, so likewise he turns them to thy good. To instance in a few things; as first, The very fall of *Adam*, wherein the devil thought to have wrought thy ruine, God in his wisdom hath turned it to thy greatest good. And in the same thing wherein the devil thought to cast thee, thy God appointed to recover thee. *Adam* fell through unbelief; thou risest again by faith: and the state in which thou standest in the second *Adam*, is a more firm and glorious state then that of the first *Adam*. So that thou hast gotten many priviledges by his fall. For instance:

1. *Adam*, though made without sin, might sin. Now it is impossible for thee, as thou art made a new creature by Christ, to sin, 1 *Joh.* 3. 6, 9.

2. The first *Adam* was made inferiour to Angels; but the second *Adam* hath made thee equal with (if not above) the Angels, *Luke* 22. 36. *Matth.* 22. 30.

3. The

3. The first *Adam* had power over visible creatures of the earth; but thou (being restored by the second *Adam*) hast power over principalities, and spiritual wickednesses in high places, *Ephes. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 10. 4.*

4. *Adam* was made righteous, and that was a glorious state; but the second *Adam* hath made thee *the righteousness of God in him*, *2 Cor. 5. ver. 21.*

The first *Adam* in his best estate, was subject to fall by the temptation of evil Angels; but nothing can make a separation between thee and thy God, *Rom. 8. 35.*

6. *Adam* had but a temporal paradise at the best, but the sons of *Sion*, by vertue of their second *Adam*, have a spiritual Paradise, *Heb. 12. 22, 23.*

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! *How unsearchable are his judgements! and his ways past finding out!* Weill doth *John* say, *John 3. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.* Mark, he doth not say, he shall have everlasting life; but he hath it already. And particularly, he hath it thus;

1. He hath everlasting life in the Promise; *Fear not little flock, it is your fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

2. He hath it in the first fruits; for what is heaven, but a more full enjoyment hereafter of what is begun here?

3. He

3. He hath it, *even now*, in possession, by Christ his head; for Christ his head is entered in already. Oh then, you servants of God, If you be entered into heaven, if you have received a kingdom that cannot be moved, *Serve God acceptably, With reverence and godly fear.*

So having spoken a word in general, to all the Sons of *Sion*; give me leave to speak a word in particular to each of them, under their several Forms; and herein I shall somewhat differ from the practice of most men.

I shall first take notice of those things that are commendable in the Saints, to whom I write, to cherish and commend that. And,

Secondly, Reprove them sharply (but yet in the spirit of love and meekness) for the evil among them. So did *Paul* with the Church of *Corinth*, *1 Cor.* 1. 4. and so to the 15. verse. So dealt Christ with the Church of *Ephesus*, *Rev.* 2. from the first verse to the end of the fifth. And in the same manner he spake to the Church of *Pergamus*, *Rev.* 2. from the 13. verse to the end of the 16. And so when he wrote to the Church of *Thyatira*, *Rev.* 2. 18, 19. *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and how thou growest; for thy last works be more then thy first.* So having taken notice of the things commendable, and praised them for that, *v.* 20. in the next place (not the first)

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he reproves their evil, saying, *Nevertheless I have a few things against thee, &c.*

In this order, or method, I shall at present speak; not in opposition to, or denial of any way now in practice amongst the godly, and warranted by the Scriptures.

A Word to those that have taken to themselves the name of *Presbyterians*.

My Brethren,

MY hearts desire, and prayer to God, is, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto each of you the spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, in the knowledge of him; that you may be able to comprehend, with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fulness of God; I thank my God on your behalf, for the grace of God that is in some measure given to many of you already by Jesus Christ. God hath made some of you instrumental for the conversion of souls, by the preaching of his Word. And I my self must acknowledge, to the glory of God, and to your praise, that I have had many sweet and heavenly refreshments by your teachings, and solid discourses,

courses, both in publique and private. In some things God hath enlightned me by you; and in some other things I have been convinced by you; and in some other things I have been confirmed by you: These things I speak by experience; and besides, I have heard from some others, that they have also received the like benefits from the Lord by you. Again, many of you are men of tender consciences, insomuch that when you see but the very appearance of evil, you will abstain from it. And the charity of many of you to the poor, is very large, as appears by the relation of many poor souls, whole bowels you have refreshed; and appears also by your stirring up others to the performance of that duty.

But my Brethren, there are faults among you: therefore I have a few things against you.

I. Why do you so frequently complain against this present Parliament, and Army, saying, They be pulling down Magistracie and Ministry? Are they pulling down any such Magistracie, or Ministry as Christ hath set up? Or else such as Antichrist hath set up, and acted his designs by? Let him that is spiritual, judge. If you examine our present Magistracie and Ministry by the word of Truth, you shall easily see, that they are not according to Christ, but to Antichrist.

First, Touching the Magistrate, I appeal to your Consciences: Hath be been the Magistrate of God for

for good to thee, in countenancing them that do well, and punishing of evil doers ? or rather, hath he not continually, for a long time, punished those that do well, and countenanced those that do ill ? Herein will I appeal to the Sons of Sion to judge. Have they not banished, imprisoned, reproached, persecuted, despised, and contemned, and that to the highest pitch of their power, all those in whom the fruits of the Spirit of Christ have appeared in any measure ? And is this a lawfull Authority, which we ought to obey ? Then let us never account it blasphemy, to say, that the most wicked of actions are lawfull and just : for, is any thing less from the will of God, or more contrary to his commands, then this ? Is not one unrighteousness as absolute a transgression as another ?

It is worth your pains to examine what lawfull Authority is : and let us consider,

It is said Romans 13. 1. *The powers that be, are ordained of God.* There is no power (that is lawfull) but it is of God : for this is most true, that the most high God is to raigin in the Kingdoms of men : and whosoever are his instruments in governing, they must derive their power from him, and act purely the command of God, and no more nor less, but even so ; as it is recorded of the children of Israel, *Exod. 39. 42, 43. They had done the work of the Tabernacle as the Lord*

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Lord had commanded, even so they had done it. And (therefore it follows) Moses blessed them. Wherefore were they blessed? Sure you see, not for their own inventions, but for their obedience, so purely and exactly after the command of God. And Paul saith, Be not the servants of men: that is, do not you observe the things that men do command, unless God hath commanded them. But you will ask, How may we know the true power from the false? (Oh that you were so teachable!) Then,

The Scripture will tell you, that the lawfull powers are of God, born of his commandments, and bearing his image, holy as he is holy; being a terror, not to good works, but to evil. And *whosoever doth resist this power (onely this) he resisteth the ordinance of God, and shall receive judgement to himself.*

But the Parliament and Army do not resist this power (spoken of by *Paul* to be obeyed) but they do resist (and I admire that you the Seers do not see it, that they do resist) that power spoken of by *Micah*, Chapter 3. ver. 11. *The heads thereof that do judge for reward, and that establish iniquity by a Law: the Priests thereof that teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof that divine for money; and yet lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord amongst us? No evil can come upon us. That the powers of this*

this Nation (that have been resisted) have been and are such, their late actions are proofs ; then which, nothing can be more full or plain to men of reason.

2. For the Ministry that are said to be pulling down. What are they ? Apostles from Christ, or from our Universities ? Who hath taught them ? God, or Man ? How are they constituted Ministers ? By God or Man ? A power Internal, or External ? By the hand and power of Gods Spirit upon their souls, and in them ; or the hands of flesh, upon their heads of flesh, without them ? They fast and pray for them ; but is it therefore certain that God doth hear and grant that particular thing ? What is their Principle ? The Spirit and living power of God, or the natural and carnal spirit of Men ? What is their Knowledge ? Of Faith, or of Reason meerly humane ? Is it of the Type, or Truth ? Letter, or Spirit ? Form, or Power ? Have they received it by Revelation, or Tradition ? And what is the end of most of them ? Is it not worldly honour and power, earthly riches ? Will they preach if their Profit invite them not ? Do they reckon themselves rewarded, if they receive not money ? Is not their cry great, and their labour extream for Mammon ? Judge you. But these Ministers are made such, in a way of imitation. They say they follow the pattern of the Apostles ; but is it so ?

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The Apostles had a glorious spirit of light and power poured out upon them, mightily manifested in them, so that they were in an holy extasie, seeming as men drunk, filled not with wine, but the Spirit, that they plainly saw the promises and prophecies fulfilled in them; and the world also might see and say that God was in them, because of the works that were done by them. They professed and declared, that they had not their Doctrine of man, nor by man, but by God; they were not instructed through or by means of the fleshly organs or faculties of their bodies, or any fleshly or outward form; but they say, the Gospel of God is revealed in us *from faith to faith*; the spirit of God doth reveal it to us; we have tasted, and seen, and felt of the Word of life. *The things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God: but we have the Spirit,* &c. And now are the pourings out of the Spirit *upon all flesh*, heretofore prophesied and promised, &c. By all which and other expressions of Scripture, which are many and abundant, it is apparent that the Apostles had a ministration of light, life, power and efficacy in them, which went forth by them in marvellous operations. Now they could with great boldness and clearness declare and preach the mysteries of the Gospel, because they had a clearness of sight of them by a proper demonstration and immediate manifestation; the Spirit of God dwells

in them, taught them plainly; and they certainly knew that he taught them: they had sure experience as we, by our bodily sight, have experience or knowledge that the Sun shineth.

But amongst all these pretenders to the Ministry, and that appropriate to themselves that Function, so distinct, as being the true and singular Apostle-imitators, or as if they were thereunto anointed and sanctified above the rest of Christians their brethren; Where is he that God hath made so distinct by any gifts or endowments, which either are comparable to those or the Primitive Christians, or do competently enable him to declare the mystrie of the Gospel, which as spiritual, so deep and mysterious? Or wherein is he a Minister more then any ordinary Christian? Nay, I will be bold to say, that if they that are called the ministers, had but so much true light of the Gospel revealed in them, as many private weak children of God, it would cause them absolutely to be ashamed to be termed ministers; so unlike are they to, and untruly accounted such. Can their humane wisdom, and School learning, and Arts, which are flesh, and of the world, unfold unto them the mystrie of godliness (so great?) If so, then the Apostle said not truly, that God hath *hid* the things of his Spirit *from the wise and prudent of the world, and revealed them to babes*. And then also may *the natural man perceive the things of God*, though Paul saith he cannot. And

And now, if all your worldly and fleshly wisdom be no more to be accounted of, what then is your Ministry? What is your complaint and murmuring against the Authority of the Nation? What are they pulling down? Apostles of Christ, or Impostors of Antichrist? Shepherds that feed the Sheep, or Wolves that devour them? Do they pull down their Feeders, or else their Fleecers? Are they pulling down Leaders, or Seducers? May I not say to you in this case; as our blessed Lord said to *Nicodemus* in another case, *Joh. 3. 10. Are you masters in Israel, and know not these things?* Indeed they are pulling down such a Ministry as is spoken of by the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. 3. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, concerning the Prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and yet cry peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.* And in the next verse you may read their judgement at large.

Well then, will you be offended with the Parliament and Army, for pulling down such a Magistracy and Ministry as this? Let me beseech you give over with speed, lest thou fall with them.

Again, my friends, I do admire that you complain of the badness of these times. Surely you do but dream: for if you do awake, you shall plainly see, that they are the best times with us in *England*, that ever we had, to live by faith. What

Hath the Lord with the besom of destruction swept away the head of the enemies of truth, and yet sad times?

What? Doth he take Princes and Lords, which were so high, and bring their heads so low as the Block, and yet sad times?

What? Have the Saints in obedience to the command of their Father, given them to drink of the bitter cup, that they have given you so long, and yet sad times?

What? Is the Lord making inquisition for blood, and meting the same measure to his enemies as they have meted to his people, and yet sad times?

What? Is the Lord magnifying the attribute of his Justice upon his and our implacable enemies, and yet sad times?

What? Is the Lord pulling down the powers of the world, and the kingdoms of men, and setting up, or at least making way to set up the kingdom of his own dear Son? And yet sad times?

Hath the Lord prospered our Armies, and given us so many victories over them that would have devoured us? And yet sad times?

My brethren, I am afraid you did not mourn with *Jerusalem*, because you do not now rejoyce with her. It is true, unto some the times are sad; but to whom?

Ans. To the deceivers of our nation; for these times

times do discover them : and (plainly) it is a bad time for false Prophets, and corrupt Judges ; for God hath threatned their ruin: it is bad times for *Babylon*, and all her brats ; for the day of her destruction is dawning, and the hour of her plagues is coming : when Kings and Princes, Nobles and Merchants shall all lie howling, weeping and wailing, crying, *Alas, alas*, and all the Saints shall stand before the presence of their tender Father, *Singing, rejoicing, and praising the Lord for his Judgements upon their enemies.*

Again, You Ministers of the *Presbyterian* Congregation, me thinks you have lost your beauty ; I do not see you in the affections of the Heirs of promise, the sons of *Sion*, as formerly : the cause of this must be in the people, or in your selves ; and I have spent a little time, and made diligent search for to finde where the cause lies, and have with an impartial heart weighed the Saints in one ballance, and you in another ; and I finde you, not *them*, too light. I mean, I finde the cause of your being slighted to be in your selves: wherefore, let me intreat you to take a word of advice from me : for I assure you, I have taken advice from you, and (I hope) shall again : though you look upon me as only worthy to be your servant, or scholar, and not your teacher ; yet I pray you minde what *Job* saith, *He will not despise the counsel of his servants.* And if you will indeed hear

with your ears, treasure up in your hearts, and practise in your lives these ensuing things, you shall soon grow in favor both with God and man.

Then there be four things that you must lay aside, and forsake; and there be five things that you must immediately do.

1. Lay aside, or leave off charging your hearers for breach of the *Scotch-Covenant*, until you have repented of your own breach of that Covenant; for how can you preach, *Thou shalt not steal*, and steal your selves? How can you boldly reprove another for sin, when you your selves are guilty of the same? How can you pull out the mote that is in your brothers eye, until you have pulled out the beam that is in your own eye? I will appeal to your very consciences then, whether you be not breakers of the Covenant in the highest nature? For, saith the Covenant, *You must bring to condign punishment all Delinquents*: And you have often declared in the faces of your Congregations, besides in your private discourses, that the King was a Delinquent in the highest nature; and yet almost all of you were against the bringing him to condign punishment. Shall not many of the Army, which never took the Covenant, and yet had their hands in bringing Malignants to punishment, rise up in judgement against you, which took a Covenant to do it, and yet above all men were against it?

If this be not a breach of Covenant, I do not know what is a breach.

Again, you covenanted to endeavour in your places, the Reformation of Religion, according to the Scriptures; but if you examine your Church-discipline, by those Rules there held forth, and you shall see you have broken the Covenant in this also. And more I could shew you; but a word to the wise is enough. Oh my dear friends, do not you be like the Tribe of *Levi* in the days of *Isa.* Chap. 28. ver. 7. *They err in vision, they stumble in judgement.* I say, do not you be like them in their sin, lest the Lord make you like them in their punishment; and so speak to his people, as *Isa.* 28. 11. *With a stammering lip, and another tongue will he speak to his people.* And you that a little before were cryed up of many, as the only Ministers of the Gospel, now are made like to those prophesied of, *Mic.* 3. 6, 7. *Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision, and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the Sun shall go over the Prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the Seers be ashamed, and the Diviners confounded; yea, they shall all cover their faces; for there is no answer of God.*

2. Lay aside, or leave off that cold luke-warm letter preaching, which seems to be only in the notion, received from the tradition, having a form

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but not a power. Remember how it was with Paul; he compared *spiritual things with spiritual*; and most of you—(for I speak not of all) compare letter with letter, and so come up with a voice of words, so cold, that some of your hearers begin to sleep, and others to withdraw from your Congregations; those that do indeed attend to what you speak, are profited very little by it. *O come then in the fulness of the Gospel of Christ; and as you have received the gift, (not studied) so administer the same.* See what Paul saith, Romans 15. 8. *I will not dare to speak of those things which Christ hath not wrought in me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed.* Again, 2 Cor. 10. 15, 16. *We will not (saith the Apostle) boast of things without our measure; that is, of other mens labours: We will preach the Gospel, and not boast in another mans line, of things made ready to our hands.* Let me then appeal to your consciences, whether this be your practice? Again, why do you tie your selves to preach onely so long, and not sometimes longer, or shorter? Did ever the Prophets or Apostles do so? Why do you tie your selves to speak onely from one Text, in one Sermon? Did ever the Prophets and Apostles tie themselves constantly, as you do your selves to this? But think not that I write against preaching an hour, or speaking from, or to a particular Text;
for

for I am not against it: but onely this, your making ties where God doth not tie you, and cry up forms more then the power of godliness.

3. Leave off the Idolizing of humane learning, and use it onely in its place; then you will look upon it as convenient, but not of absolute necessity: it will enable you with expressions, but not with spiritual interpretations. Never think that you know more of the minde of Christ then others, because you know more of the Tongues then they. Alas I take all the learning, arts, parts in the whole world, and give them together into one man, yet this man by all his parts, wit, and arts, in Logick, Tongues, and Philosophy, is unable to give a true spiritual sense of one of the easiest and plainest Scriptures. The spiritual mystery is so high, he cannot reach it; so deep, that he cannot fathom it; so long, that he cannot measure it; and so broad, that he cannot comprehend it. Hence it is, that many in our days are great Scholars in humanity, and meer ignorants in Divinity. Was not *Paul* a great Scholar, as he testifieth of himself, and yet ignorant of Christ, knowing nothing of the spiritual sense of Scriptures? Oh you Scholars, have you been so long at *Oxford* and *Cambridge* (the two eyes of our Land) and can you not see without Spectacles? Have you been at the Fountain & must the streams teach you? Do you not know that there is a spiritual learning, as well

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as humane? If you do know it, why do you give a false interpretation of most Scriptures, taking them in the literal, when they are to be understood in the spiritual sence? To instance in one for all, 2 Pet. 3. 16. *There are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned, wrest, as they do also other Scriptures, to their own destruction.* Now the question is, of those things in *Pauls* Epistles, which *Peter* here speaks of, as hard to be understood, and which the ignorant did wrest: The question is, What is meant here by *unlearned*; Doth he mean unlearned in humane, or unlearned in spiritual things?

Ans. He thinks the Apostle in the same verse resolves the scruple.

1. For first it is said, *Paul wrote those things according to the Wisdom given unto him*; which is not meant wisdom of the world, for God doth account that but foolishness (saith the Scripture) and *Paul* renounced it also, and said, *I came not with excellency of words, or of wisdom, shewing unto you the testimony of God*; Neither (saith he) *stood my Word and Preaching in the enticing speech of mans wisdom, but in plain evidence of the Spirit, and of power*; that your faith should not be in wisdom of men, but in the power of God. And we speak wisdom, and not the wisdom of this world, &c. but we speak of the wisdom of God in a mysterie,

mysterie, even the hid wisdom, &c. which the Princes of this world have not known, &c. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, which searcheth the deep things of God, and which we have received, that we may know the things that are given us of God, &c. Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, &c. 1 Cor. 2. throughout; which you see doth abundantly testifie, that *Paul* spake not according to humane Learning. Read also *Galat.* 1. ver. 12, 16.

2. *Peter* here saith, that one of those difficult sayings of *Paul*, which the unlearned understood not, was this, *That the long suffering of our Lord is salvation*; which being a spiritual thing (as all the things of salvation are) cannot be understood by natural wisdom; for the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God: therefore *Pauls* wisdom was spiritual, and their unlearnedness there spoken of, was this; that they had not that wisdom, in which he knew salvation; that is, the wisdom of God: for worldly wisdom they might have, and be nevertheless ignorant of all spirituals.

3. They were unlearned, that is, they had not the learning by which thy might understand those things in the sense which might tend to their salvation, or true knowledge of God; and that surely

ly is onely a spiritual sence : for else to wrest it to another sence could not be to their destruction.

4. *Peter* here exhorts the Saints to take heed of that error of the wicked, lest they also should be led away with it ; accounting it (you see) a wicked error: And then in the next place exhorts them to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ*, as being a thing contrary to that wicked error, and a remedy against it. Now if the *knowledge of Christ*, and *growing in grace*, be a remedy against that error, then it is most plain that their unlearnedness (which is there said to be the cause of their error) was not of humane Tongues and Sciences; (for then *Peter* would have bidden them study these, to keep them from error:) But it was of the grace of God, and of the knowledge of Christ, they were ignorant and unlearned ; and therefore he bids them grow in that grace and knowledge, that they might not err.

So that that saying of *Peter* being thus truly understood, it is most plain, that their unlearnedness which caused them to err, was their ignorance of Grace, and of Christ, not of Humane Learning.

To which also, let me add these Rules, *viz.*

1. That a mans principle by which he doth converse with (or apprehend) any thing, must be of a nature suitable to the nature of that thing which he converseth with or apprehendeth : as in particular,

You

You cannot apprehend or discover an object of Sense by the principle of Reason For example, You cannot by your Reason (or any thing else, but your sense of Hearing) apprehend or know that there is any sound or noise, nor how it soundeth. But the ear and Voice are suitable; not a Voice and another Sense; as we cannot see a Voice, &c. Just alike impossible it is for Reason (meerly natural) to know spiritual things; as the Scripture saith, *The natural man knows not the things of God.* Nature hath not a power suitable to attain them.

Rule 2. Every evil or defect is remediable only by its contrary good or supply: as Darkness is remediable by Light, Carnalness by Spiritualness, weakness by strength, ignorance by knowledge, &c.

Which two Rules (if you observe them) will help to the understanding of those words of *Peter*.

But if yet you are perswaded that your University-learning can dive into the spiritual sense of Scripture, I will propose to a whole Synod of your Function, to reconcile these Scriptures hereafter cited, that are in the letter so contradictory one to another. For instance;

One Scripture saith, *Thou must love thy father, mother, wife, children, &c.* Another Scripture saith, *Thou must hate all these, if thou wilt be my disciple,* Luke 14. 26. One Scripture saith of God, *Anger is not in me:* Another saith

saith, *He is angry with the Wicked every day*; Psal. 7. 11. One saith, *Ye do always resist the holy Ghost*, Act. 7. 51. Another saith, *They could not resist the Spirit by which he spake*, Act. 6. 10. One Scripture saith, *Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents*, John 9. 3. Another saith, *That he that saith he hath not sinned, is a liar, and the truth is not in him*, 1 John 1. 8, 10. One saith of *John* that he was not *Elias*, John 1. 21. Another saith of the same *John*, that he was *Elias*, Mat. 11. 14. Mat. 11. 12.

I might instance in at least forty Scriptures thus contradictory in the letter.

Now this is the thing that I would ask you; Whether through the understanding of Tongues, or Arts humane, you can give the true genuine sense of those Scriptures? Surely you cannot: for these Scriptures were penned by the holy Spirit, whose mysterious language the ear of man natural cannot hear, nor his heart conceive, much less his tongue express or interpret.

To conclude; you do ignorantly look upon yourselves as so many learned Apostles; now considering that there are many *Aquila's* and *Priscilla's* that can teach you the way of God more plainly, Read and well consider that, Act. 18. 25, 26.

That place of *Peter* about the *unlearned* hath led me to a long digression. But now to return again to advise you.

4. Lay aside, or leave off your kindling of flames in the State, and blowing the bellows of contention and vain jangling, and fall to preaching the Gospel of Peace; Let the State-Governours alone with the State affairs; And also, let the Lord Christ alone with the Discipline of his Church. Let it not be said of you, as once it was of the High priests, that they were the onely enemies to the Kingdom of Christ, and yet the great pretenders to it. Do not reproach the Lord's people as once they did, for believing in, and following of their Lord Christ, saying, *Have any of [us] the rulers believed on him?* No, none (said they) but a few ignorant people that knew not the Law. Do not accuse the Lord's people in your Pulpits, as the Priests did *Paul*. Acts 24. 5. saying, he was a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarens; lest the Lord's people should answer you as *Paul* did them, Acts 24. 14. *After the way which you call heresie, so worship I the God of my fathers, &c.*

So having spoken of the things that you must lay aside, or forsake; give me leave, as briefly as I may, to lay before you a few things that you ought immediately to practise; I say, immediately, because it is high time, if you have not staid too long.

1. If you be the Ministers of Christ, observe your

your Commission given you, *Mark 6. 15. Mat. 28. 19.* the sum of which is this, *Go ye to all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every creature:* And *Paul* elsewhere gives an account of his Commission, and saith Christ sent him to preach the Gospel, and so he went preaching peace by Jesus Christ. Seeing God in these latter days speaks unto us by his Son, *Heb. 1. 2.* why do you speak so much by *Moses*? You say *Moses* must prepare us for Christ; sure that is not in your Commission. Me thinks I hear you saying with *Peter*, Master, Let us build here three Tabernacles, one for *Moses*, one for *Elias*, and one for thee; and there appeared a bright cloud, upon the appearance of which, *Moses* and *Elias* (which was *John Baptist*) vanished away. And God answered *Peter* from heaven, and told him, *This is my beloved Son, hear him.* Why do you then build a Tabernacle for *Moses*, and another for *Elias*, seeing the bright cloud hath expelled the dark administrations of them both?

O then follow the advice of Christ, and keep close to your Commission; and into whatsoever house you enter, let your first words be, *Peace to this house.* *Luke 10. 5.*

Why do you teach Repentance before Faith, seeing true and unfeigned Repentance is a fruit of Faith, not a preparation for Faith? The Ninevites believed God, before they proclaimed a Fast; and

and thou must first look upon Christ, whom thou hast pierced, by Faith, before thou canst mourn, as one mourneth for his onely Son. The goodness of God will lead thee to repentance, *Rom. 2. 4.* *And the grace of God will teach thee to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, Tit. 2. 11, 12.*

Faith is a notable ground-work, in a sence, of true Repentance; without this Faith, it is vain to think to build up our selves in sanctity of life, and sincerity of conversation; For, *he that cometh to God, must first believe that God is, Heb. 11. 6.* And without this Faith it is impossible to please God: and whatsoever is not of this Faith, is sin, *Rom. 14. 23.* My friends, is not Faith the first stone in the spiritual building, the first step in a Christian race, the first link in our golden chain of Christianity, the first act of our new life, the first degree in our holy conversation, the first round in your *Jacobs* ladder, whereby you ascend up into the presence of your Lord? Should you not acquaint your hearers first with the doctrinal part of Divinity, before you press the practical part; endeavour to have them truly principled; and then press obedience, as the fruit of those principles? I have heard some of you say, that whatsoever obedience doth flow from any man, if it flow not from good principles, that obedience is in a sence disobedience. See what Christ commands, *Mat. 12. 33. Make the tree good, and*

his fruit will be good : and good reason ; for, Mat. 7. 18. *A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.* Now here is the reason why you see so little fruit of all your labours ; you preach so much, yet do so little good : you do not do Gods work in his own way ; you preach and contend for Order, and scarce any in the Kingdom are more out of order then your selves. In a word, you require good fruit from a corrupt tree, and Christ tels you, it cannot be. When *David* taught his son *Solomon*, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. he instructs him first in the doctrinal part, before the practical part ; he must first know the *God of his Fathers*, before he is prest to serve him. This was *Pauls* advice. *Tit.* 3. 8. Again, our blessed Lord Christ, *John* 15. exhorts the people first to abide in him ; and being in him by faith, then bids them bring forth fruit, saying, *As the branch cannot bear fruit, except it abide in the Vine ; no more can ye, except you abide in me.* So *Paul* dealt with the *Colossians*, *Col.* 1. 9, 10. He prays and desires, first, that they might be filled with the knowledge of Gods will ; and then ver. 10. (as the fruit of that knowledge) *that they might walk worthy of the Lord, being fruitful in every good work.*

2. The next thing that you should practise after you have exalted Christ alone to be the onely King, Priest, and Prophet, not in word only, but in power ; in expecting the teachings of God the
father

father to your souls, by and through him, have recourse to his rules in the Gospel for your practise; and then you will not look so much upon Synods, and not be ashamed to confess him before men: If you have been in the Pulpit, delivering his Message, why are you so afraid to have your doctrine questioned? why will you not give your hearers that liberty that Christ hath given them. to judge of what you have said? Are you ashamed to own Christ, when his Doctrine is examined? or else, do you find your selves unable by sound Doctrine to convince the gainsayers? But you will say, if any be not satisfied, let him come to us in private. Let me ask you, where have you a rule for that? Do you not deliver your things publickly? and do not the Scriptures tell you, That a publike evil must have a publike reproof? But you will say, we have done no evil, we have preached Christ according to our commission. Then (my friends) never fear to have it questioned: but (I beseech you) if any can object against what you have taught, so he do it in the spirit of meekness, rather to find out Truth, then to carp at Truth; And seeing Christ hath given him that liberty, 1 Cor. 14. do not you deprive him of it. If you would but make trial of this, I will assure you, you might gain many priviledges by it: In particular, I will shew you two or three.

1. You will take away all just occasions for

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any to cavil at your doctrine, or speak evil of you in private.

2. You will encrease your own knowledge; for there are some *Aquila's* and *Priscilla's* do hear you: and you also may be more inabled to instruct.

3. It will make the lustre of the truths which you assert, the more beautiful, if you vindicate them.

4. It will make all your sayings seem the more worthy serious and sober consideration.

O that I could see the Ministers of *England* as willing to be taught, as they are to be teachers; as swift to hear, as to speak: Truly, this were a way to unite the greatest things we want in our Kingdom.

5. When you have exalted Christ alone, and diligently observed his Commission; next I beseech you, be tender of his Lambs, and feed them; and so much the rather, because they are yet standing in the streets of *Sodom*, and the dogs of *Egypt* do bark at them: Oh send forth no more dogs to snap and bark at the poor tender ones; for they have a tender Father, the Almighty Lord God, that doth take all the injuries done to them, as done to himself; and takes notice of all the hard sayings against them, as you may read at large in the Epistle of *Jude*, verse 15.

But you will (as I have heard you) say, We speak not against those that are truly godly; but we cry out against blasphemers.

So

So was our blessed Lord Christ persecuted and reproached under the name of a blasphemer, *Luke 10. 33.*

And so was *Stephen* (a man full of the holy Ghost, and of Faith) accused for a blasphemer, *Acts 6. 13.*

And they were great learned men that did this: and this was written for some to learn. Again, Christ was called a deceiver, *Mat. 27. 63.* and a Wine-bibber, *Mat. 11. 19.*

It would be worthy our labour to examine from the beginning of the Bible to the end, how in all ages, and under all administrations, the Priests, and Levites, and pretended Ministers, which would be known by the names of Prophets, Seers, Watchmen, or Leaders; and in this present generation above all others have had their hands in (almost) all the Wars, Divisions, Combustions, Uproars, Tumults, and Troubles in the kingdom. For matter of Blasphemy, Heresie, Superstition, Idolatry, &c. were not this Tribe the ring-leaders, as also in persecuting the Lords people? nay, the greatest opposition that our Lord Christ himself met withal, was from that Tribe; & have not they the chiefest hand in our present Troubles? I leave the whole kingdom to judge. Wherefore, my friends, consider upon what ground you stand, and upon what foundation you are built: and let it be your study to put out, not to kindle flames in the kingdom;

to heal the wounds with which we languish, not to make more. Remember these words of Christ, *Blessed are the peace-makers*, Mat. 5. 9. I know this is the practise of some of you; but truly the number of such is but few; yet I do believe there are, and so in all former ages there were a few scattered up and down that were true Prophets, waiting upon God for an heavenly message; and that they do receive, and declare unto this Kingdom.

4. Seek not your maintenance in an unjust way; but cast your selves upon the providence of God, as for the salvation of your souls, so also for the maintenance of your bodies. Can you trust God with a soul, more worth then ten thousand worlds, and can you not trust him with a little earth, your bodies? You teach us to pray for *daily bread*; and you do well; but must you your selves take carnal care for yearly bread? If not, what means this bleating of sheep, and lowing of oxen? your pleading for Tithes in your Pulpits? O my friends! be ye sure to do God's work and I will pawn my life for him, he will pay you your wages; feed his lambs, and your God will give you your meat in due season. O let the same mind be in you as was in your brother *Paul*, 1 Cor. 9. 15. where he renders three reasons why he would not preach for Money nor Tythes.

1. Because he would not make his glorying void, 1 Cor. 9. 15.

2. Be-

2. Because he would not make the Gospel of Christ chargeable unto them, *verse 18.*

3. He would not compel any to pay Money or Tythes for Preaching, lest he should hinder the Gospel of Christ.

How many such *Pauls* have we in our days? Is there indeed one of a thousand? Yes (my friends) there are, through God's goodness (to my knowledge) a few.

I speak not this against a just maintenance for a true Ministry ; for then I should sin against God and my own conscience; for I know God saith, *he hath ordained that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel;* and my own conscience tells me, that if they have sown unto me *spiritual things*, I should not keep back from them *carnal things*. All that I here speak against, is this, Your looking for your maintenance in an unjust way.

5. Give no offence unto any man, neither to Jew nor to Gentile, nor to the Church of Christ; but keep *a conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards men.* Be patient towards all; speak evil of no man; seek the glory of God before your own honour, and the good of his people as your own good; and *as ye would that others should do unto, and speak of you, so do you unto, and speak, of them.* In all your actions, propound Christ for your pattern; and learn of him, for he was meek and lowly.

Now to you called Independents.

I May say to you, as once Paul did to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 1. 4. *I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God that is given you by Jesus Christ.* Yea, I may say to you, as Christ said to the Church at Ephesus, Revel. 2. 2. *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil, and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars. And thou hast born, and hast had patience under all thy reproaches: for thou hast had many opposers, reproachers, slanderers, backbiters, and evil surmising against thee.* If thou holdest to the end, and art willing to be a follower of Christ, as well in his Humiliation, as in his Exaltation; thou hast a fellowship with him in the one, as well as in the other.

Again, This I finde in thee (O thou Independent) Thou desirest to walk by Rule. When thou wouldst know the minde of God, thou lookest into the testimonies of his revealed Will, the Old and New Testament: Thou groundest what thou holdest upon that Word; thou accountest the Principles & practices evil, that are not warranted by that Word. And if men come unto thee, and
speak

Speak with the tongues of men and Angels, thou wilt (with the noble *Bereans*) search the Scriptures, to see whether the things they speak of be so, or no : and if they speak not according to that Rule, thou wilt presently conclude, it is, *because there is no light in them* ; Nay, thou knowest, *That if a man come, and Preach any other Gospel then that which thou hast received*, Gal. 1. 8, 9. *he is to be accursed*. And this thou hast also, (to thy commendation) the more others do slight, despise, and lay aside the Scripture, as a thing out of date ; the more thou dost embrace it, read it, confer and meditate on it, and account it *sweeter then the honey, or the honey-comb*, and esteem it (with *Job*) *more then thy natural food*. Thou knowest right well, *they were written for thy learning*. Again, I may say of thee, as once it was said of the Church of *Pergamos*. Rev. 2. 12, 13. *I know thy Works, and Where thou dwellest, even where Satans seat is : yet thou holdest fast Christs name, and hast not denied his Faith*. Again, this thou hast, that thou withdrawest from every Brother that thou clearly seest to walk disorderly : thou dost reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering. Again, this thou hast ; thou lookest to the spiritual growth of those with thee : thy members watch over one another, and in love reprove one another, and many of you do it in the spirit of meekness, as you would that they should do

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do unto you in the same case, even so do you to them.

Again, this you have: You take a special care of the poor among you; and you lothe the unjust practices of some other Congregations of the *Presbyterians*, that gather a just maintenance for the Poor in an unjust way; They cut large thongs, but it is of other mens hides; they do not with Christ, chuse Deacons; but with Antichrist, Collectors; Some of which may pay the Poor, and are sure never to receive their money again, though they borrowed it for that purpose. But God be thanked (O *Independents*) thou hast not so learned Christ; thou knowest well that *the Lord loveth a chearful giver*, and accepts none but a Free-will-offering; you give to *all*, but have a special regard to the *household of faith*, according to rule, *Gal. 6.*

Again, this thou hast; Thou forsakest not the assembly of Saints, as the manner of some is; you hear the Word in publike, and build up one another in private. You do not (as some do) cry up the Publike, and contemn the Private; nor cry up the Private in contempt of the Publike. Thou lookest into the Gospel, and findest both of them commanded and commended, and therefore makest use of both. Thou knowest, that as God is no respecter of Persons, so is he no respecter of Places. Thou findest him teaching thee in publike, and also in private; abroad, and at home;

Thou

Thou findest him in the Fire to save thee, and in the Water to help thee, and in the Prison to free thee; Thou knowest thy God is in all places, and yet comprehended in no place.

Now, having thus taken notice of the things commendable in thee. according to that Rule, 1 Cor. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. and as Christ dealt with the Church of *Ephesus*, Rev. 2. 2, 3.

Give me leave also to deal plainly with thee, as *Paul* did 1 Cor. 1. 11, 12. and as Christ with *Ephesus*; and then I shall not spare to tell thy Congregations and Members, that there are faults among you; therefore I have somewhat against you.

1. If you be not guilty of that sin that *Paul* reproveth the *Corinthians* for, 1 Cor. 1. 11, 12. I am sure you are guilty of that sin that is reprov'd, *1am. 2. 2, 3, 4.* You have the Faith of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons; for if there come into your Assemblies (as *James* saith) a man with a gold ring, and in goodly apparel; and there come in also a poor man in vile rayment, you are apt to say to him in gay clothing, Sit thou here (in a good place) And though you do not in plain terms or words say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit at my foot-stool; yet you let him stand at a distance, or sit at your feet. And *James* tells you, *1am. 2. 4.* Ye are partial. And many times those poor ones whom ye slight, God hath chosen; and the rich ones whom

whom ye honour, God hath rejected : *verse 3. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in Faith ? &c.*

2. You are strange to those that are called *Presbyterians*, which many of them being truly godly, you should visit ; and if there be any way of wickedness in them, reprove them ; if they be low in their principles, endeavour to raise them, and where they are imperfect in the way of God, teach them more perfectly : Love not one man, because he is an *Independent* ; hate none for being a *Presbyterian* ; for this were to know men after the flesh, *2 Cor. 5. 16.*

3. There is utterly a fault among you, in that many of you do fashion your selves according to this world ; if there be any foolish fashion going, ye are in haste to take it up with the first, quite contrary to the command of God, *1 Pet. 1. 14.* And as in your apparel, so in your long hair ; why do you Christians wear it like *Ruffians* ? It is true, I know, that as Religion stands not in meat or drink ; so neither stands it in cloaths, nor hair, long or short : But your abuse of this doth dishonour Religion, grieve the Saints, and harden the World ; especially of the first of these, to wit, *Cloaths*. Therefore I beseech you hear a few words further.

Is your Kingdom or glory of this world. or in things outward, or fleshly, or even in vanity ? Is it

is your work appointed, and your delight (ye Saints) to please the irrational fancies of your fleshly minds ? Can you who are so distinct and distant in your principles from the carnal and ungodly, so suit and conform to them in those things, whose very fountain, or cause, is none other but ignorance of God, which also are rationally censured even of those that are without ? Have you no better enjoyments ? no better kingdom then this ? Is not your glory within ? Is not the most Excellent your satisfaction ? his presence in your hearts, your great refreshment ? Union and conversation with him, your heaven and blessedness ? Do you walk as Christ did, *whose meat and drink was to do the will of his Father* ? Are you like him ?

And seeing your fashions are costly, let me ask you, Do you believe that God hath given you so much of his creatures for any such purpose ? Can you say to the Lord, *We bless thee in our souls that thou hast given us these creatures, and disposed our hearts by thy Spirit to use them thus* ? Did ever God call such things, *Sacrifices well-pleasing to him* ? Or have you the creatures in such superabundance ? or are better opportunities so scarce, that you cannot better use them ? do you think so ? Then hearken hither.

Here are many of us miserable wretches, whose bodies pine for hunger and thirst, and strave with cold

cold : Some of us are exiles and strangers, some of us in prison, some of us sick, some wounded, lame, some weak, some widows, fatherless, and friendless. Here we stand before you; ye see us, ye know us : and can you yet with-hold relief ? Have you no bowels of compassion ? Hath mercy taken wing, and returned to her eternal Fountain that sent her forth ? Hath she no tabernacle nor temple with men ? Hath she left all hearts to hardness ? Will she not vouchsafe us any of her divine bounty now, but leave us desolate captives to necessities, till they have pursued our flesh to dissolution ? Where are the promises of our dear Redeemer, to dwell with men to the end of the world ? When shall the *pourings out of the Spirit of Grace* (promised) be ? Or where are those *Temples of his habitations* ; that we may go unto them ? Will no man shew us ? Ah sad ! O doleful case ! Miseries devour us, and Pity is departed from us !

O dear friends ! Are there all these cries and tears, and yet do your vain pleasures bewitch you to be deaf ? Awake, awake ; for now your Lord commands, Go, hear what those my (and your) poor members say ; see why they weep. *Lord, they cry for Want.*

Cbr. What, want ? and thou stand by with such rich stores of mine ? O most unfaithful ! most unkinde ! Dost thou love me ? and do I hur-

ger in my members, and wilt not feed me with my own, but imbezle those my stores to such base Harlots as thy fleshly fancies? Ah. unfaithful wretch! Get hence; thou shalt not stay with me, nor see my face these many days. I desire you to consider whether Christ doth not speak thus to your spirits. But I have digressed, and now return.

4. This is also a fault among you, that you do not pity the poor blind world, and endeavour to bring them into the knowledge of the Truth, by laying before them the free love of God through Jesus Christ. All your studies are how to build up Saints: therefore to them you do altogether speak. Nay, I have heard Sermon after Sermon in publike, besides your practice in private; and you speak only to Saints enlightened, though most of the people to whom you speak, are in the old man, and have need of such a Sermon as Christ preached to *Nicodemus*. And so you are blameworthy as the *Presbyterians* are; yea, more than they: for many of them do teach the Practical part of Divinity before the Doctrinal; and you tel of great enjoyments before your hearers are truly principled. He that doth truly preach the Gospel, must preach to sinners, to convince them, as well as to Saints, to confirm them. If you will indeed be followers of Christ, you must not content your selves to preach a piece of the Gospel: for Christ, when he came among sinners, he was intreating
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and perswading them, and calling them to come to him, that they might have life: He often encouraged them to come to him; telling them, *he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* He bids come unto him, *all you that are weary and heavie laden, and he will give you rest:* And saith, *They that come to me, I will in no wise cast off.* And when he gave his Commission to his Disciples, he told them, *They must preach the Gospel to every creature.* Oh then pity the World, pray for the World; rebuke, instruct, exhort, perswade, and beseech them to be reconciled to God: your Father lets the Sun shine, and the rain fall upon them; and bids you learn of him to love them.

Do they revile thee? then with *Paul, bless them,* 1 Cor. 4. 12. Do they persecute thee? Then with him, *suffer it,* 1 Cor. 4. 12. Do they take away thy *cloak*: give them thy *coat.* Do they smite thee on the *one cheek*? offer the *other.*

Do they curse thee as *Shimei* did *David*? Then as *David*, let them alone: it may be the Lord hath bid them do it. To you is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to *believe*, but also to *suffer* for his sake: And how knowest thou, but that he will reward thee *good* for all their *evil*? If thou wert of the world, the world would *love* thee; but because he hath chosen thee out of the world, therefore the World doth *hate* thee.

*A Word to those that go under the Name and
Title of Anabaptists.*

MY Brethren, there are these things worthy
of commendation among you.

You meet often together, and when you come
together, as good Stewards of the manifold grace
of God, as every one hath received the gift, so he
doth administer the same : You exceed in some
sort all other Churches, namely, in this ; That you
do administer a right Ordinance to right Ob-
jects : You will do Gods work in Gods way. I
mean, you baptize those to whom baptism be-
longs ; you do that which is required. And in
some measure you do according to the command
of Christ, 1 Thes. 5. 14. *You warn them that are
unruly ; you do comfort the feeble minded, support
the weak ; and in some measure, ye endeavour to
have patience towards all men.* And when men
begin to deny and slight Gods Ordinances, you
withdraw your selves from such. And this also
is found in you, for which I commend you : You
look upon the Scripture, as written for your
learning, and therefore you often read, and me-
ditate of it ; you cannot bear with those that
slight it, and speak reproachfully of it ; you have
experience, that God doth teach you by his word
mediately, more then by immediate revelations.

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But my Brethren, there are faults among you; therefore I have a few things against you; wherefore bear with me, if I deal plainly with you. First, the Scripture bids you speak evil of no man; why then do you imagine in your hearts, and speak evil of the *Independent*, because he will not be re-baptized? Why do you so judge the *Presbyterian* for baptizing children, to whom it doth not belong? They do not see by your eyes, therefore they cannot walk by your rules: Are they darkness in this? so once wast thou. Dost thou out-strip them in this? it may be (nay I am sure) they do go beyond thee in other particulars of obedience. Do they neglect the Ordinance of Baptism? that is their evil: but thou dost rest upon it, and this is thy evil: do they sin in slighting Baptism? thou sinnest in Idolizing of it. Oh then be sparing to censure and judge thy Brother.

Here is another branch of your miscarriage; you suffer no man (though never so well gifted) to speak among you; no, though he be able to teach you all, unless he be joynted to you by the Ordinance of Baptism with water: and though he be baptized with the Baptism of the Spirit, without which that of water is nothing, you hear him not.

Again, You often take Scripture in the literal, when you should take it in the spiritual sence. When Christ speaks of the Baptism of the Spirit, you

you understand it to be of Water. In a word:

You live much under the administration of *John*, who tels you, *That he must decrease*; but not so much under the administration of *Christ*, who shall increase.

Again, you make Baptism the ground of your communion, and so disorder what God hath ordered; for the ground of Communion should arise, first from that union you have with Christ your head; and secondly, from that near relation you have each to other, as being one in the same Spirit. In a word, your knowledge that you have one of another, is after the flesh. When will you be of *Pauls* mind, 2 Cor. 5. 16. *to know no man after the flesh*? I may truly say of you, as once it was said of *Apollos*, Acts 18. 25. *That he was instructed in the way of the Lord; knowing only Johns Baptism of water*; and surely you have great need, as he had, to have *Aquila* and *Priscilla* to take you aside, and teach you the way of God more perfectly, &c.

A Word to those that hold *Free-wil.*, and
General Redemption.

MY Friends, some things I have observed from you, by my being among you; which I desire to learn of you, and for which I commend you; I have seen you bearing one anothers burthens, relieving one anothers necessities, according

94 *A VVord to those that hold Free-will,*
to your abilities, often visiting one another, with
many outward expressions of the inward love
which you bear to one another ; these things
ought to be done ; and there are other things
which you ought not to leave undone ; as also, to
love those that are not under your Form.

These Principles also do you hold :

1. That Jesus Christ gave himself a rancome for
all ; and you prove it by Scriptures, *1 Tim. 2. 6.*
1 John 29. 1 John 2. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 15.

2. That remission of sins ought to be preach-
ed to every creature : which proves the first, That
Christ gave himself a ransom for all ; and there-
fore remission of sins must be preached to all :
and that you prove by these and the like Scri-
ptures, *Luke 24. 47. Mark 16. 15. Luke 10. 5.*
Isa 45. 22.

3. That every one is to believe the forgiveness
of his sins ; for if Christ dyed for all, then all
ought to believe the Gospel. And that all are
called upon to believe , you bring these and the
like Scriptures, *John 1. 7. John 17. 21.* Now, if
your principles drawn from these or the like
Scriptures, be according to the spiritual sence of
them, you do well. So much for the things wor-
thy of commendation in you.

But, my friends, there are many faults among
you, for which I have at present a few things
against you.

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The first is, Your abuse of Scriptures; 1. In taking them in a literal sence; 2. Looking into, and speaking of onely those Scriptures that seemingly in the letter do confirm your principles; whereas, if you rightly understood them, you would find the sence of one Scripture to stand with the sence of another; as to instance a little in the fore-named things.

First, you say, That Jesus Christ gave himself a ranfome for all; and remission of sins is to be preached to all. Now compare those Scriptures with *Rom. 8. 30.* where he speaks of particular, not of general Predestination. So when he speaks of Election to the *Ephesians*, he points at a particular, not at a general Election. And when Christ prays, *Joh. 17.* he prays not for the world, but onely for those whom the Lord had given him out of the world. And *Joh. 6. 44.* There can none come to him, but whom the Father draweth, Read and well consider that one Scripture, which all of you are not able to answer, *Acts 13. 48.* And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. I know what false gloss you put upon this Text, through your ignorance; You say the Original saith thus; *As many as believed, were ordained to eternal life.* And with this false sence you deceived me for a few days; but when I searched the Original, I found you lyers; for that word is truly translated;

96 *A Word to those that hold Free-Will,*

and I have spoken with many poor souls that you have deluded with these and the like things. You say, Election depends upon qualifications; and bring these or the like Scriptures, *The Lord chuseth to himself the man that is righteous*; never minding that other text, which saith, *There is none righteous, no not one*. So then, if he chuseth none but the righteous, and there are no righteous, no not one; then he chuseth none. *O ye simple ones, how long will ye love simplicity! and the scorers delight in scorning, and fools hate knowledge!* If this Text doth speak to any such in England this day, it speaks to, and concerns you chiefly.

Did you never read with understanding that text which saith, that *we* (and all the Nations of the world) *are in the hands of God, as clay in the hands of the potter, who maketh one vessel to honour, another to dishonour as he pleaseth?* And if there be any man so impudent to say, as I have heard some of you say, that then God is partial; see how Paul checks such, in Rom. 9. 19, 20. *O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?*

If thou wilt know a reason why the Lord doth elect some to life, and to pass by others, he is pleased to give thee no other account then this, Exod. 33. 19. *I will be gracious to whom I will be*

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gracious; and I will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy; and Whom he will he hardeneth.

If thou wilt also know a reason why he will cast some into the pit of destruction, and give to others life everlasting: I answer, God hath no Rule to act by, but his own Will; so that for him to do what he willeth, is just: and it is just for no other reason, nor upon any other ground, but this, *viz.* because it is his will to do it; and this is the justness of mans actions, to do what God hath commanded or declared that he will have man to do. Now, I say, this is the reason why he will cast some to destruction, *viz.* to magnifie his Justice, or perform his Will determined upon such as do transgress the Law given them; and for this cause is such destruction just, because it is that which the eternal Will or Decree hath appointed to follow upon transgression. And after the very same sort doth he exalt the attribute of his Mercy in the salvation of others. Read *Rom. 9.* and thou wilt find most of that Chapter spent in disputing this very thing.

Another gross error that you hold contrary to the Scripture, is this; That the soul is mortal as well as the body.

Again, you hold and teach, That if God commanded the Gospel to be preached to all, and Christ died onely for some, then God commands a lye to be preached to the most part of men;

98 *AVVord to those that hold Free-will,*
And that is Blasphemy, to say that God commands a lye to be preached.

Again, You ground your own particular faith upon that General Redemption: and if your ground be false, your faith must needs be so: for no good fruit proceeds from a corrupt tree: And wherein doth such faith exceed that of Devils, that believe and tremble?

You say, There is a power in every man to do whatsoever is commanded; a power to chuse, and a power to refuse. You cite that of *Joshua*, and the like Scriptures: *Behold, I have set before you this day life and death, chuse you whether, &c.* Ergo, (say you) the people have power to chuse and to refuse.

You say also, that upon your doing, or not doing, depends your eternal blessing, or everlasting cursing; and yet (unless it be in some few things which I have forespoken in your commendation) you are the most unfruitful people that ever I came amongst, except our new *Upstart Wantons*, or *New Notionists*, (to whom I shall speak next.) You spend the most of your time in speaking evil of almost all other Christians that walk not by your rules, and hold not to your errors: you backbite and reproach them with that bitterness of spirit, as is more sutable to the principles of Heathens than of Christians. I will forbear to speak the one half of what I have been an eye-

eye-witness unto in this kinde, in that little time when I was among you. You spend your time to spie a mote in your brothers eye; but when will you pull the beam out of your own eyes?

Again, you hold that a man may fall from Christ, or grace: you have often affirmed, that a man may be a childe of God to day, and a limb of Satan to morrow; that he stands by obedience, and not by grace.

When he doth well he is accepted;

When he doth ill, he is rejected.

And so, by your errors, our salvation seemeth to depend upon Works; and so the Free-grace of God is nullified, and the obedience of Christ made of none effect; and in effect, you plainly deny Christ.

In a word, you hold more foolish, sottish, unsound, unwarrantable, and uncomfortable points then any Sect; and your conversation is just answerable to your principles; so joyn both together, and behold their ill-shapen form and fruit.

1. By them both you dishonour God. 2. You grieve his people. 3. You delude the world. 4. You cause the way of Truth to be evil spoken of.

Remember therefore from whence ye are fallen, and repent; or else the Lord will come unto you quickly, and fight against you.

*A Word to the new Upstart Wantons, that
deny Gods Ordinances : or New Noti-
onists, full of VVbymseys.*

MY Friends, I have spent a few days, and made diligent search to find something in you worthy of commendation, that so I might speak to you, as I have to other Churches, taking notice of your Good, and of your Evil. But (my Friends) I cannot find any thing among you but Blasphemy and Heresie, and trusting in lying vanities. Therefore, as *John* said in another case, 1 *John* 1. 3. I shall say to you in this case, *That which I have seen and heard, declare I unto you :* and what I shall now charge you with, I have been an eye and ear witness of, conversing with you, and being among you. Our Lord *Jesus Christ* speaking to the seven Churches of *Asia* by *John*, discovereth in each of them something worthy of commendation ; but when he comes to the seventh Church, the *Laodiceans*, there was not so much as one grain of goodness to be found in her : And yet this Church looketh upon her self as the onely excellent Church, transcending all the rest, *Rev.* 3. 17. *I am rich, and increased in goods, (saith she) and have need of nothing : and knowest not that thou art wretched, and poor, miserable, blind and naked.*

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Here is thy state to an hairs bredth, Oh thou new *Notionist*; Thou lookest upon thy self as one gone beyond all others in high enjoyments, and that canst live upon God without use of Ordinances, and worship God without Forms.

You say the Scriptures are not the Word of God.

Some of you have said, The Scriptures will teach you to lye, and steal; you say, God cannot be dishonoured by any Action you do.

And some of you have said, The reason why they will not be drunk, is, because they would not waste their money, and cause others to laugh at them, and because it is hurtful to their bodies; but not for any dishonor to God.

You say, That the Scriptures do not concern you; that it is onely a Declaration of the Administrations that others have formerly been under, and worshipped God in. You say, There are an hundred and fifty lyes in it.

You deny the Resurrection and the Judgement, and say, that there is no sin in the world; but that all actions are alike.

You say, That the highest enjoyment and perfection that a Christian shall have, is in this life.

You make your own wills your rule; and when you are carryed forth by them, you say you are carryed forth by the Spirit of God.

You say, there are neither Angels nor Devils, but an administration of life, and an administration

tion of death ; or one of light, and another of darkness.

When you come together, you spend your time (for the most part) in jesting stories, and carnal merriment ; and if any reprove you for it, you say you are carried forth to it.

You speak evil of others that wait upon God in the use of means ; you call them *Legalists*, *Formalists*, &c.

Most of you despise to hear any Minister preach, though never so excellent a Teacher.

Some of you say, that you can make better Bibles your selves, then that which is made already ; saying, this Bible is but the opinions of men. You call Prayer, & all other Ordinances, bondage.

You say, if one man kill another, it is God that doth it ; yea, you can use deceit in your particular Callings, and say, You do no evil.

You care not for the weak, how you offend them ; nor for the strong, if you grieve them.

And you, above all other Sects in the world, cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of ; most of the offences are come by you : *Wo be unto you*, as the Scripture saith. The *Presbyterians* hear of your blasphemies, errors, and abominable things that you hold : and because some of you were heretofore *Independents*, and some *Anabaptists*, it makes the *Presbyterians* cry out so bitterly against the *Independents* and *Anabaptists*,

tists, thinking them to be all such as you are; when I must needs bear witness for them both, they do hate your principles and practices, as they do the devil, the father of them. In a word, you have turned with the Dog to the vomit, and with the Sow to the wallowing in the mire.

Wherefore, if there be any sparks of grace remaining in you; if there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies; then, oh then *remember from whence you are fallen, and repent.* Learn of the Prodigal Son, and come back again to your Father; for you have fed a long time upon husks, and your companions have been the Swine. *You have back-slidden from your God; return to him again; it may be he will receive you.* Seek meekness, seek righteousness, it may be you may be hid in the day of the Lords anger. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings; cease to do evil, learn to do well.

There are also another sort of people, called *Millenarians*, who hold that Christ shall come, and reign a thousand years upon earth personally. But seeing the number of these is but few, and their errors (for the most part) but in circumstantial, not in substantial; I shall at present omit to say any thing to them.

A Word to another sort of People that are under none of those Forms.

THere are also a quarter-part, if not more, of the people of *England*, that are not under any of the aforefaid Forms; neither *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, *Anabaptists*, *Free-Willers*, nor those upstart men of vanity and empty notions last mentioned; I say, They walk not, nor keep company with any of these, but at a distance.

And these are of two sorts.

The first is a precious, sweet, moderate sort of men and women, looking after, and enquiring into the power and glory of Truth, and Godliness, more then the Form. They clearly see all those to whom I have spoken before, to be in extreams, either towards the right hand, or towards the left, and for the most part, knowing Christ after the flesh; Yet this sort, not under Forms, look on those that are under Forms, for many of them, to be (as indeed they are) members of the same body, whereof Christ is the Head. These men desire to know no man after the flesh; they love no man because he is a *Presbyterian*, neither do they hate any because he is an *Independent*. They desire to have their moderation known unto all men, seeing the Lord is at hand. As these mens hearts are tender to all, so their purses are open to all. They
desire

The downfal of the aforeſaid Sects. 105

deſire to be good, more then to be thought ſo ; and eſteem the power of godlineſs more then the form.

But ſecondly, There are another company, and theſe are the greateſt part, that are under none of the aforeſaid Forms, who look upon all the reſt, and count it ſtrange that they run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of them all. The greateſt piece of theſe mens Religion is, to watch for the haltings of the reſt. Theſe men and women ſpend their time (for the moſt part) in gaming, drinking, back biting, railing at all others that will not do as they do. Theſe will not joyn themſelves with the *Presbyterians*, becauſe they will not love them ; they will not come among the *Independents*, becauſe there they ſhall meet with reproof ; they eſteem their liberty more then their Religion ; therefore they keep company with thoſe where they may have their liberty.

A few Words by way of Prophecie to the downfal of Presbyterie, Independency, Anabaptiſm, Antinomians, Free-willers, Vain Notionists, and all other Sects now extant in England.

A Word in general to all the Saints, who are under any of the aforeſaid Forms.

O All you ſervants of the moſt high and mighty God, heirs of promiſe, and ſons of *Sion* !
Look

106 *The downfall of the aforesaid Sects.*

Look for great alterations, and mighty changes; see what desolations God will make in the earth, and look for nothing but the Lord to be revealed from heaven, which will be mighty in his dispensation, and exceeding glorious in revelation, strong and powerfull in operation. He will bring to pass his determination, that is, he will *destroy in this mountain the face of this covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all Nations*, Isa. 25. 7.

If you ask what this vail is that shall be taken away;

I answer: There are many vails, whereof this is one, Thy knowing of Christ and Christians after the flesh. As soon as ever the Lord took this vail off our dear brother *Pauls* eyes, see what a change it wrought immediately upon him, 2 Cor. 5. 16. *Henceforth know I no man after the flesh, yea, though I have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know I him so no more.* Our looking upon men, and loving them because they are under this, or that Form, is a knowing them after the flesh. *Presbyterians* look upon others of the same Judgement, worshipping God in the same Form, and therefore love them. But let these speak never so little against their Form, and presently they cast them out of their affections: And also the *Independents*, they know men after the flesh, much after the same manner. And like-

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wise the *Anabaptists* and *Free-willers*, they are veiled with the same vail. And therefore what I say to one Sect, I say to you all. You shall speedily receive a total Rout: You have gathered your selves together, but you shall be scattered, yea, you shall be broken in pieces. Lo, here is Christ (the *Presbyterian* faith) in the publike Ordinances, therefore highly esteem the publike Preaching and frequent the publike Assemblies. Then comes in the *Independent*, and taking a strict view of the *Presbyterial* way, sees many disorders amongst them, and so separates himself from them, and joyns himself to those of his own judgement; and so meet in private, saying, in effect, Lo, here is Christ, Lo, here is Christ. Then stands up the *Anabaptist* in opposition to both, and saith, Christ is not with you in publike, nor with the *Independent* in private; but Christ is with us in the *Baptism* of *John*; Lo, lo, here is Christ. Then comes in he that holds *General Redemption* and *Free will*, and saith, Christ is among none of you all; for you do eclipse his free-grace, and limit his unlimited mercy: for he dyed for all, but you say it was but for some. 2. The Gospel is to be preached to all; but you say, though he preached it to all, yet he intended it onely to some. 3. Whereas we hold, that all should believe the remission of their sins, you say, none can believe but a few that are elected: but we hold, that as in the

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first *Adam* all dyed, so in the second *Adam* all are made alive. So that, if any perish, let them thank himself; for upon his obedience or disobedience depends his weal or wo: and so God doth neither elect one, nor reprobate another, before he hath done good or evil. Lo, here is Christ, here is Christ, say the *Free willers*.

And so all other Sects, Lo, here is Christ, saith one; lo, there is Christ saith another. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, *Behold he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not.*

You have all built your outward house of external discipline upon the sand, and it must fall, because it is not grounded upon the Rock Christ: you have made your Communion the ground of your Union; and that must fall, because it is not the Lords, but mans building.

Quest. *But how do you know that Presbyterie must down; and Independency, Anabaptism, and the rest of the Sects must down?*

Ans/w. I answer, Christ told the Jews, *Joh. 8. 56. That Abraham saw this day, and was glad.* Now if *Abraham* by faith did see the day of Christ coming in the flesh, many years before he came; Why may not I and others see the day of Christ coming in the Spirit, to destroy all fleshly Forms, some few years before it be finished?

But if thou askest, *How shall I know that thou*
propheisest

The downfal of the aforeſaid Sects. 107

prophieſt true concerning the downfal of all theſe ?

I answer thee in this caſe, as the Lord himſelf answered his people in another caſe, Deut. 18. 21, 22. *If thou ſhalt ſay in thine heart, How ſhall we know the Word that the Lord hath ſpoken, from the Word that he hath not ſpoken ?* The Lord there answereth, *When a Prophet ſpeaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing come to paſs. it is from the Lord; if it come not to paſs, it is not from the Lord.*

Again, I have by faith ſeen all theſe opinions faln; and I have heard from many others, that they have ſeen them faln alſo. Therefore, *That which I have heard and ſeen, declare I unto you, that ye might have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son in the Spirit: for then, and not till then, you will give over ſaying, as (in effect) you do, I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, I am of Cephas: Then you will not ſo much cry up a Form, but endeavour the Power of godlineſs.*

Deliver thy ſelf, then, O Sion, that dwelleſt with the daughter of Babylon, Zech. 2. 7. For the Lord ſhall ſlay Babylon, and call his ſervants by a new name, Iſa. 65. 16.

*A short description of a true Church-state,
or Communion of Saints, that shall
stand against all Opposers.*

Paul writing to the Church of *Corinth*, beseecheth them in the name of Christ, that they would endeavour a perfect joyning together, in one mind, and one judgement: and good reason he had for so doing; for he well knew, that all joyning whatsoever that were imperfect, were not of God, and so could not stand. In opposition to all such imperfect unitings, or unsound communions, he dissuades this Church of Christ from pleading or standing for parties, and from saying, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, &c.* He doth in effect tell them, They must cease from knowing Christ and Christians after the flesh; for that must vanish. He doth perswade them not to build upon the sand; for that will fall. The Spirit of Christ doth exhort you to give over saying, *Lo, here is Christ; lo, there is Christ*: for that is unsound, and cannot stand.

That Communion of Saints that shall stand, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, let the Winde blow, the rain descend, and the floods

floods come and beat upon it, it will not fall; for it is founded upon a Rock; That Communion then is this:

A Communion that doth arise and flow from Union, I say it is a Communion of Saints, arising from a clear apprehension of their union with Saints, 1 Cor. 12. 13, 14. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit: for the body is not one member, but many, ver. 20. for now are they many members, yet but one body.* Now when a Saint comes to see, that every one in whom the Lord Jesus appeareth, though in the least measure, is a member together with him in the same body, whereof Christ is the head; then his heart longeth to joyn himself in fellowship with such who have fellowship with the Father and the Son in Spirit, whether in Ordinances, or otherwise.

He considers, that he, and all the faithful under the whole heavens, have all one Father, all one Mother, all one elder Brother, all one calling, all one hope of their calling, all clothed with the same Robe, all enclined to the same Work, all united by the same Spirit, all ruled by the same Word; and so he honours them all as the body of Christ, and nourisheth and cherisheth them all as his own body. Oh who can break the links of this golden Chain! Who can throw down this

spiritual building? No, no, *the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.* Read, and well consider that in *1 Pet. 2. 5.* *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, &c.* Or, as it is in the margin, *Be ye built up a spiritual house.* Go now through all the Shires and Cities of *England*, and enquire, nay, make diligent search among all sorts of people professing and pretending to Christ, for such a Congregation, that of lively stones hath built up such a spiritual house; and note that Church; it shall never fall.

Oh where is such an assembly of Saints to be found, as is spoken of *Ephes. 2. 22.* that are built together for an holy habitation of God through the Spirit? Shall I appeal now to thy very conscience, and ask thee, O thou zealous *Presbyterian*, Is your building, which is so much cryed up in *England*, such a Building?

Shall I appeal now to thy conscience, O thou *Independent*, and ask thee, Art thou built up for an habitation of God through the Spirit? Dost thou indeed offer up a spiritual sacrifice? Me thinks there is so much Truth in both the *Presbyterian* and the *Independent*, as to answer in the Negative.

Well then, Hence it is you love one Saint, and hate another, because you are not perfectly joyned

joyned together ; you yet know Christ and Christians after the flesh ; you have been joyned together in one Form, but not united together in one Spirit. But the day is dawning before you, and the Day-star is rising in you ; at the appearance of which, your Communion shall be in the Spirit, as well as in the Form ; and your love shall be to all, as well as to some, and when you are absent in body, (as *Paul*) you will be present in spirit, joying and beholding their Spiritual Order.

Now there are many Reasons why the Saints ought to be thus joyned together. Take two.

1. Because they are commanded to stand fast in one Spirit, *Phil.* 1. 27. And how can they stand fast in the Spirit, if they be not joyned in the Spirit ?

2. Because that Worship wherewith they must worship God, must be a spiritual Worship, *Joh.* 4. 23, 24. *1 Pet.* 2. 5.

And until Saints are thus joyned together, they are not fitly joyned, according to that, *Eph.* 4. 16.

Neither until they be thus united in one Spirit, can they be said to have any fellowship of the Spirit, according to that, *Phil.* 2. 1.

Again, until they be thus united in one Spirit, how can they yield obedience to that command, *Ephes.* 4. 3. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ? And that they

might keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, see what powerful convincing arguments he brings, Ephel. 4. 4, 5, 6. *There is one body (saith he) and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Mark then (I beseech you) the Lord by *Paul* doth here lay down, 1. The union thou hast with him. 2. The union thou hast with his people; and from both these, as from the ground, he puts his people upon a sweet communion and fellowship, both with himself and his people. Upon this rock hath *Christ* built his Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against a Church thus stated.

But I have been in communion with all sorts of Professors now extant in *England*, and waded out of one Form into another; and at last I have clearly found, that much of their building hath been upon sandy foundations. I shall then shut up all with one Word of Advice to all.

O ye sons of *Sion*! behold your union with *God*, consider also that ye are one, not with some (onely) but with all the Saints, under whatsoever Form they be. Wherefore, love them all, pity them all, do good to them all; and as you are united in one Spirit, so let the Word and Spirit be your Rule. When you have gathered your selves together according to the order of the Gospel,

Gospel, chuse to your selves Pastors and Teachers, Elders and Deacons; make use of all Gods Ordinances, but rest upon none; look upon them all but as Pipes and Organs through which he conveys himself to the soul, &c.

Quest. **B**Ut me thinks I hear some say, what Religion, or (at least) Opinion is he himself of, that hath written this Treatise? He can be no *Presbyterian*; for he writes against them: He is no *Independent*; for he reproves them: No *Anabaptist*; for he dislikes them: No *Free-willer*; for he writes directly against them. What then is he?

Ans. I answer, I am a Christian.

You will say, So are all the people of *England* Christians.

But that I deny; for though there are many Christians of mans making, yet there are few, yea, very few, of Gods making.

But you will say, What are they then, if not Christians?

I answer, There are many Heathens and Turks, Jews and Infidels, many Canaanites and Amorites, Perizites, &c.

But I am a Christian. This name was first given to the disciples in *Antioch*. I believe in one God, Father of all; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer

deemer of all, and in one sanctifying Spirit of Grace; I believe that it is the Office of the Father to Elect; The Office of the Son to Redeem; and the Office of the Holy Ghost to sanctifie those, and only those whom the Father hath Elected, and the Son Redeemed: And I do believe my own interest in all these; without which the knowledge of it is nothing. The Father loves me freely; the Son manifests that love to me; and the Spirit doth evidence it in me. The Father loveth me, as Redeemed by his Son; the Son looks upon me, and loves me, as being given by the Father for him to Redeem; and the Holy Ghost, seeing the love of the Father in chusing me, and the love of the Son in Redeeming me, he also sets his love upon me, and manifestts this unto me, which is the earnest of my inheritance. I believe that God hath his Being in himself, and gives Being to all other Creatures; and the cause why he made me, was for his own glory; and the end why he elected me in Christ, was, that I should bring forth fruit to him: I know I am not my own, I am bought with a price; *Wherefore I desire to glorifie God with my body and soul, which are the Lords.* I endeavour, as to love God, so also to love his people; not some, but all; and to love my enemies; desiring to become all to all things, that I might in my place gain some. I do believe that I ought to give no just offence to the Jew, nor to the Gentile,

nor

nor to the Church of *Christ*; wherefore, as much as in me lyeth, I endeavour to keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards man. I love all, and yet I desire to withdraw my self from every brother that walketh disorderly.

I do believe that I am a servant of *Christ*.

I do believe I am a friend of *Christ*, *Joh. 15. 15.*

I do believe that I am a brother of the Lord *Christ*, *Heb. 2. 11.*

I do believe that I am in as near Relation to *Christ*, as the Wife is to the Husband, *Rev. 1. 9.*

I do believe that I am a Member of his own body, *1 Cor. 12. 13.*

I do believe that the Lord takes all the evil done to me, as done to himself, *Zach. 2. 8. Mat. 25. 45.*

I do believe that I am a Joynt-heir with *Christ*, *Rom. 8. 17.*

I do believe that I am joyned to the Lord, and so one Spirit with him, *1 Cor. 6. 17.*

I do believe that I have everlasting life already, according to that, *Joh. 3. 36.*

1. In the promise, *Fear not little flock, it is your Fathers pleasure to give you a Kingdom.*

2. In the first fruits, for what is Heaven hereafter, but a more full enjoyment of what is begun here?

3. I have everlasting life already in possession, by my head *Christ*.

I do believe that all this is but a taste of what I shall be, according to that, 1 Joh. 3. 12. *Now are ye Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what you shall be; but when he shall appear, ye shall be like him.* The serious consideration of which, (I doubt not) will draw up my conversation more and more to be in heaven, even whilst I remain here on earth.

I do believe that my sins, by Christ, are taken out of the sight of God.

I do believe that the design of Christ was to take it away out of my Conscience, that there might be no more conscience of Sin, *Heb. 9. 14.*

I do believe that as Christ hath taken away sin out of the sight of God, and out of my own conscience; so in due time he will take away sin out of my conversation, according to that Scripture, 1 *Pet. 1. 15.* and *Luke 1. 75.*

In a word, I do believe, my sins past, present, and to come, are all laid upon, and done away by Christ, *Isa. 53. 6.*

I do believe, that as there was no good foreseen in me, that did cause the Lord to set his love upon me; so there is no evil that can be done by me, that can cause him to hate me.

A Word to the Parliament, the Representative Body of the Kingdom.

I Cannot put a period to this little Volume, without one word to you who are Members of the High Court of Parliament. Honoured Worthies, you have begun well, go on, that we may find in *England*, that that was so earnestly sought for in *Jerusalem*, *Jer. 5. 1. Men executing judgement, and speaking the truth.* And then why may we not expect to be partakers of the mercy there promised, *A pardoning of the sin, and a healing of the Land?* Eye the Lord Jesus in all your actions, and advance his Kingdom, as much as in you lyeth: honour him, and he will honour you; and endeavour with *David* to deliver his Lambs out of the Lions mouths; for they are tender in your Fathers eyes, let them be so in yours: Your undaunted courage, in not fearing the faces of men, and your executing of Justice upon all offenders, without respect of persons, or partiality; as it is very acceptable in the sight of God, so the sound of it is very sweet in the ears of his People. And as the Saints in *England* have put up many Petitions at the Throne of Grace, that God would give you
un-

undanted spirits; and having by experience found God answering their request by the late actings, as touching the King and Lords, they are now turning their Prayers into Praises; to the Almighty, for answering their prayers in assisting you. And the more difficulty you found in the work, the more God will honour you for the same.

But, Right Honourable Worthies, What should be the cause that the people of *England*, whom you do represent; yea, they that have chosen you, and have ever since with their lives and estates assisted you; What is the reason, that they all with one voyce, since the death of our late King, are saying to you, as once the children of *Israel* to *Rehoboam* after the death of their King, 1 King. 12. 4. *Ease us of our heavy burthens, take away our Taxations so heavy;* and you have answered the people as *Rehoboam* did, if not in your words, yet in your deeds, saying, *My little finger shall be heavier then my Fathers loyns; and whereas you had a heavy yoke before, I will make it heavier: and whereas my Father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with Scorpions?*

If you say, This is none of our answer or practice; let me ask you, what means the Excise, the doubled Contribution and Free-quarter, and many other grievous Taxations, and Assessments? And when we consider the time in which you increase and continue these devouring Caterpillars, it doth

doth aggravate your evil, as well as our sense of the Misery; as to instance,

1. In a time when our trading at Sea is spoiled, and our Ships daily lost and taken.

2. In which our trading by Land is almost utterly decayed.

3. In which all sorts of provisions for the nourishment of our almost-famished bodies is risen almost to a double price.

4. Though what little Money and Plate we had; we lent before upon the publike Faith, which proves a dead Faith, or at best but an historical Faith; for notwithstanding all Promises, we receive none of it back again.

5. In a time, in which many people are but as it were newly returned to their homes, after banishment for a long time from their habitations and estates, left to the cruel mercies of the adversary.

6. In which many thousands have had their houses burnt to ashes, and cry for help to their neighbours that have escaped that calamity.

7. And lastly, which addes to our misery more than all the rest; In a time when we expect a full deliverance, having by the assistance of the Almighty power, gotten the victory over all our enemies; so that we may yet lament in the words of *Jeremiah*, *We looked for peace, and there is no good; and for times of peace, and behold trouble.*

God

God hath put into your hands a power, if you have but hearts to make use of it, to take off these heavy burdens wherewith your friends are laden.

Are not the Crown-Lands in your hands, and all the Treasures thereunto belonging ?

Are not also the Bishops-Lands in your hands ?

Are not all the Customs in *England* in your hands, which amount so high ?

And also Delinquents Fines and Compositions ?

And yet must we have Excise remain, and Contribution doubled ? Is this the reward that we shall have for all our obedience to you ? O consider, consider. To reward us evil for all our good, it is not sound ; and to make your friends your foes, it is not safe. Shall I acquaint you with what I know, and that upon sound ground ? If the king had gotten the day, and all into his hands, as you have, Would he not have freed those that assisted him, and have maintained his Army upon the cost of those that opposed him ? Did not his practice begin to testify the truth of this ? So tender was he of those that assisted him in his extremity.

And will not you that profess your selves to be the servants of Christ, and favourers of his people, do as much for Christ, as he for Antichrist ? Oh then ! Oh then ! let the cost light upon those that were the cause ; and they that forced you to raise an Army, let their estates pay the Army.

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